(IR45p) 4**0**p





* THE TABLOID Adam Mars-Jones reviews The English Patient 6 PAGES OF FILMS

COMMENT John Walsh's Diarry the state of middle. class enjoyments

Commons committee says voucher scheme is unlikely to raise standards or improve parental choice

Tories scorn Major's nursery revolution

John Major's flagship nursery voucher scheme is unlikely to raise standards, incréase parental choice, or even provide extra places for children, according to a damning report from an influential, Tory-dominated Commons committee.

According to the report, leaked to The Independent last night, the Education and Employment Select Committee believes that vouchers will not boost private and voluntary nurseries. In fact, they may squeeze them out of the picture. The revelation is bound to

prove damaging to the Prime Minister, who has personally promoted vouchers and who hoped they would boost his party's election chances. Under the scheme, piloted in four local authorities over the past car, parents of all four-yearolds will receive £1,100 in vouchers for their education the general election.

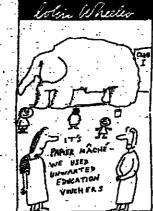
The report has caused a solit among Conservatives on the committee, some of whom felt it was far too critical of the scheme. It was finalised last night after weeks of wrangling and should be published before the election.

Based on studies of the four pilot areas - Kensington and Chelsea, Wandsworth, Hammersmith and Fulham and Norfolk - it says that even where there has been some success, it

EXCLUSIVE by Fran Abrams

be repeated throughout the

The four aims of the scheme, according to the report, are to promote parental choice, to ensure good quality, to extend pre-school provision to all fouryear-olds whose parents want it



and to safeguard the private and voluntary sectors. Its conclusions cast doubt on every one

The primary problem, the report says, is that the scheme has led to more four-year-olds being recruited into reception classes by schools anxious to

safeguard both pupil numbers and funding. This has adversely affected its chances of success in every one of its objectives. Parental choice "would not be enhanced" if schools took more pupils to the detriment of nurseries and playgroups, it adds.

tradict claims by the Department for Education and Employment that the problem might not be as severe as had been suggested. Most local au-thorities have already changed their admissions policies in order to take more four-year-olds, it adds, and have thus put private and voluntary providers at

of the scheme accept that ouchers have made little difference to parental choice. Families in rural areas have had to accept whatever is available locally, while nurseries and cannot offer extra places because they have no room to expand.

The portents are "mixed" on whether the scheme will increase the number of places. However, the report details evidence that some local play-groups and private nurseries may be forced to close.

"Overall, evidence ... remains inconclusive on the likelihood of the scheme significantly expanding provision for four-year-olds," it says.



ry school reception classes in themselves may well not provide proper nursery education.

Their classes are often too large, teachers inadequately trained and facilities inappro-priate. And while they may be able to cater adequately for pupils who are almost five, they are unlikely to do so for those

who are only just four.
"Such classes may not be appropriate for their educational needs and therefore may not be providing high-quality education," the report says.

Basic standards set by gov- four constant into schools". ernment advisers are treated as And Institution increasing prothe norm, rather than the ab- vision in private and voluntary solute minimum in many schools and playgroups, it sug-gests. This, too, "could be detrimental to the quality of

education" Far from helping the private and voluntary sectors, as John Major himself hoped it would. the scheme is actually likely to make life harder for them, the

committee says.

There was evidence that state primary schools "were pressuring parents into taking up places ... The overall effect of the scheme was to hoover all

settings (the scheme is) actual ly threatening their viability in many cases?, it says. The report adds that the

scheme is time-consuming and involves "a considerable amount of work" for schools. David Blunkett, Labour's education spokesman, said last night that the report was "a damning indictment" of this crecial Tory policy, "That is why

Labour is proposing to replace it with sensible planned partnerships at a local level." he said Leading article, page 15

A High Court judge has broken legal ground by ordering an anorexic teenager at risk of starving to be detained for treatment - by force if necessary. The 16-year-old became anorexic at 14 and has threatened to com-

Hussein's anger

mit suicide.

The Israelis faced increasing international isolation as King Hussein of Jordan vented his rage at tragic actions" initiated by Benjamin Netanyahu in a letter to the Grayson.

United States prepares to attend a meeting with European and Amb diplomats in Gaza next Sat-

Andrew back in play Rob Andrew, 34, who retired

from international rugby 18 months ago after winning 70 caps, has been called into the England squad for Saturday's final Five Nations championship match against Wales in Cardiff as cover for injury doubt Paul

Hogg: I have a grip on meat safety

Political Editor Katherine Butler

Douglas Hogg, the Minister of Agriculture, told the Commons yesterday that be had got a grip of meat safety and that criticism contained in leaked "pieces of paper" were, in effect, so much hogwash. Condemning his many critics out of hand, the minister said: This irresponsi-ble scaremongering will not only damage the meat industry here in Britain, but will also damage our standing in Europe.

The fact that it is hysterical, irresponsible and ill-informed will not be understood in Europe. They will simply treat

soon tested because the European Commission is planning to send a team of veterinary in-

spectors to Britain. The furore in Britain over failure to enforce rules to protect consumers against BSE, E. coli or other potentially fatal infections has triggered alarm in a number of European Union capitals not just about British beef but also about the safety of British lamb, pork, ham and chicken which are still widely exported to the continent.

Brussels last week demanded a copy of the 54-page government hygiene inspector's re-port, allegedly suppressed because it revealed shocking lapses. But last night a Com-

 Douglas Hogg ought to resign. He may say it wasn't me', but that's not how the system works. ?

Richard D North, page 16

mission spokesman confirmed that nothing has been submitted. "We are still waiting" he said. No dates have been agreed for the Commission's inspection, but sources said some urgency would be required to

problems as soon as possible. "This is a source of great concern to the Commission but also to the member states which rely

on British certification that the

meat exported from the UK has been slaughtered in keeping with strict EU hygiene relations" a Commission official said. It also emerged yesterday determine the full extent of the

that an EU inspection of four abattoirs during a spot check in Britain last June found "serious weaknesses". The slaughter houses were found to be flouting anti-BSE rules which require

the removal of certain cattle tissues, but were also failing to safeguard against contamination of meat by animal faeces.

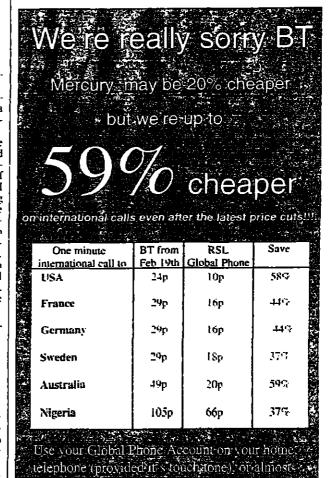
Faced with a barrage of leaked evidence that the ministry had suppressed one report on abattoir cleanliness, had taken no action on inspectors' allegations of a "timebomb" of declining standards, and had ignored repeated local authority warnings of inadequate resources to tackle food safety. Mr Hogg said meat hygiene stan-dards were being driven up.

He told the Liberal Democrat spokesman. Paul Tyler: "I very much regret the fact, but I accept that over a long period of time people have become sceptical about assurances that they have received from ministers and others." But he added: "That scepticism is not justified, but it is a fact and it needs to be recog-

nised and acknowledged."

However, he told the House that any public inquiry would completely vindicate his position. Against a background of spluttering protest, he said: "I have the advantage of knowing the facts and therefore I am able to say what the outcome is going to be: that the decision to set up the Meat Hygiene Service was a very sound one ... and that during the last two years there's been a substantial improvement in standards.

there's more to be done, and the



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le Soyloka: 'Dissent will hst as long as Abacha'

THE BROADSHEET

James Roberts

The Nobel prize-winning writer Wole Sovinka was yesterday against the military govern-charged with treason by Nigement of General Sani Abacha. charged with treason by Nigeria's military government over a spate of recent bomb blasts in the country. Since December last year a series of blasts on army buses has killed three soldiers, and wounded dozens more. Soyinka, along with 11 other dissidents, faces the death penalty if convicted.

The winner of the 1986 Nobel Prize for literature was one of many opposition figures who annulled poll recognised.

fled Nigeria two years ago to Europe and the United States, where they have campaigned The military regime annulled the Nigerian general election of 1993, thus preventing its pre-sumed winner, the wealthy businessman Moshood Abiola, from being installed as president. Abiola was jailed in 1994, when he declared himself president, and Soyinka and other

then campaigned to have the

General Abacha, who seized him extradited back home. The been taken before the recent vipower in November 1993, four accused dissidents face a twomonths after the elections, is implementing a transition plan he says will allow him to hand power to a democratically elected president in 1998.

Nobel winner charged with treason

But his critics say he intends to use the plan to retain power, and point to his bloody human rights record. Gen Abacha's regime executed the dissident playwright Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other oppoopposition figures have since nents in November 1995.

THE TABLOID

Charging Soyinka could pave the way for Nigeria to try to get

count charge of "conspiracy to levy war against the federal military government of Nigeria" and causing explosions in various parts of Nigeria."

Soyinka, who condemned the country's rulers in a 1996 book entitled The Open Sore of a Continent, said vesterday he was not surprised to be charged with treason because it was clear Gen Abacha wanted to "eliminate" him.

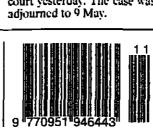
"We learned the decision to try us on treason charges had

Radio & TV23,24

olence ... The whole thing is orchestrated. Abacha is trying to get rid of us." the writer said by telephone from California. Sovinka said he did not know

who was behind the bombings. but thought the army could be responsible, as it was so divided. "Dissent in Nigeria ... will not go away until Abacha has gone. But this is a marathon, not a sprint," he said.

Eight of the 12 dissidents are in Nigeria and were brought to court vesterday. The case was



Leading Articles15

significant shorts

Bleak future for shipyard as MoD contract is lost

The future of the Kvaerner Govan shippard on the Clyde and 1,200 jobs were under threat last night after the loss of a crucial £200m Ministry of Defence order. The Secretary of State for Scotland, Michael Forsyth, who had pledged to do all he could to secure the contract for two Royal Navy tankers, came under tierce attack. Sigbjorn Ellingsen, managing director of Kvaerner Govan, described the decision to award the contract to GEC Marine's VSEL yard at Barrow-in-Fuse Cumbria, as a "severe blow". He warned that up to 1,000 jobs would be lost by the end of the year. Kvaerner took over the yard in 1988 and successfully carved out a niche for specialist commercial vessels. But the MoD said that the VSEL bid offered the "best value for money for the taxpayer".

Tagging scheme to be extended

Trials of electronic tags for criminals are to be extended for a third time because the courts have refused to place enough offenders under "house arrest". Since the tags were launched in July 1995, only 325 offenders have faced a curfew order monitored by electronic tags, which is far less that officials had predicted. The Home Office is understood to be preparing to extend the trials, currently held in Reading, Norfolk, and Manchester, for a further year and expand the catchment areas.

Harry Fletcher, of the National Association of Probation
Officers, said the tagging experiment had been a catalogue of
failures. "They are now looking to tag fine defaulters and others
for whom it will serve no purpose," he said.

Jason Bennette

Neo-Nazi group members jailed

Three members of the extreme right-wing group Combat 18 were jailed by an Old Bailey judge yesterday for possessing material designed to stir up racial hatred. Two of the men were given 17 months and a third 12 months by Judge Henry Pownall QC, who said that the issue of the group's magazine, Combat 18, and CDs found in their possession could only be described as "threatening, abusive and insulting". The three cannot be named for legal reasons.

Straw looks to role models



Young offenders could be helped by adult "mentors" to act as positive role models under Labour's shake-up of the youth justice system, Jack Straw (left), the shadow Home Secretary, said yesterday. He said existing experimental schemes showed that they could encourage educational attainment, keep young people away from drugs and help them cope with adverse peer pressure and build self-esteem. Offenders could also be

asked to carry out reparation work for victims under Labour's proposed "final warning", replacing the current cautioning system. Mr Straw cited last November's Audit Commission report, Misspent Youth, which found no case in which a young offender even asked to write a letter of apology to their victim.

Patricia Wynn Davies

'Standard' to be prosecuted

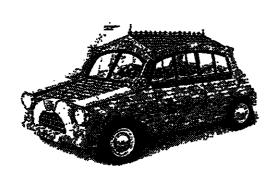
The Attorney General plans to bring contempt proceedings against the London Evening Standard newspaper, over an article which led to the abandonment of the Whitemoor prison IRA breakout trial.

Five IRA prisoners and an armed robber were the defendants at the January trial, where they were accused of breaking out of the top security prison in Cambridgeshire. Proceedings at Woolwich Crown Court, south-east London, were stopped after the newspaper published an article on life inside the neighbouring Belmarsh prison which identified three of the defendants as convicted IRA men in contravention of an order imposed by the judge.

Four teenagers die in car crash

Four teenagers killed in a car crash in Yorkshire yesterday were believed to be from Harrogate Grammar School. The four girls died when their red Peugeot 106 car left the road near Harrogate, hit a tree and burst into flames. A police spokesman said the crash did not involve any other vehicles. Identities of the victims were being withheld until relatives had been informed.

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people



Special scoop: Ben and Jerry, the American makers of designer ice cream. In London yesterday for the launch of a new flavour in aid of Comic Relief. The company, which nurtures an ethical intege, has put the face of the comedian Lenny Henry on the side of the tubs of Fudge Behaving flating and pletiged to donate 50p to good causes for every one sold (Photograph: Edward Syless).

Parky and Auntie back together

e flirted with Shirtey Maclaine, was verbally assaulted by Muhammad Ali and almost castrated by Emu, the manic puppet. Now Michael Parkinson, doyen of chat show hosts, is being wooed back by the BBC. The corporation is expected to make an announcement about Parkinson, 61, in the next few weeks and he is poised to sign a lucrative deal. He is likely to interview some of the stars he has sparred with before, including Diana Rigg, Raquel Welch and Richard Harris.

BBC producers were impressed by ratings for the recent repeats of his finest Interviews. BBC1's Controller, Michael Jackson, said yesterday: "What we want to see is a return to the completely straightforward asking of intelligent questions on a chat show. That is the challenge we will be putting to Michael Parkinson." Parkinson's original series ended in 1982 after 11 years

and it regularly attracted more than 12 million viewers.

Mr Jackson said at the BBC's spring programming launch yesterday that he will not be changing his schedules to deal with the launch of Channel 5 at the end of the month. "We won't say exactly what we are putting on on Easter Sunday," he said. "But there is always a special schedule for Easter. Channel 5 won't change our

taking the presidency out to ordinary

people and using it to modernise fre-

She told the Taolseach, John Bruton, yesterday of her decision and made it known that she would be a

willing candidate for the post of UN's

Commissioner for Human Rights. The

The President will see out her term

until the end of the year. But lobbying

next week when the Taoiseach meets

the Bill Clinton in Washington during

rights lawyer and frequent visitor to Third World countries give her strong

credentials for such an appointment.

drew praise from all sides. The

Taoiseach said she "probably de-

serves to be described as the best

At home, her energetic contribution

Mrs Robinson's record as a human

to secure her UN role could begin

vacancy arose when the incumbent, Ayalo Lasso, quit to become

Ecuador's foreign minister.

St Patrick's Day celebrations.

land's image abroad.



commitment to having a broad range of programmes."
Channel 5 said that it had completed the retuning of 90 per cent of nine million videos and will launch on time.
Easter on the SBC will be dominated by The Missing Postman, a two part comedy drama starring James Bolam and Alison Steadman. It will also see the airing of Before They Were Famous, a special hosted by Angus Deayton where celebrities are caught on film doing commercials and bit-parts before their careers took off

BBC2's cult comedy hit of the season looks like being Sunnyside Farm, an agricultural comedy described
as "The Archers on acid" and starring Phil Daniels and
Shooting Stars' George Dawes - in real life Matt Lucas
- as Britain's first transsexual farmer.

BBC1's schedule is heavy with fly-on-the-wall documentaries, led by Jonathan Dimbleby's four-year look at the handover of Hong Kong in The Last Governor.

David Lister and Paul McCann

Robinson aims to swap Emerald Isle for top UN post Mary Robinson yesterday killed off Irish hopes that she will seek a second term as president and dropped a strong hint that she wants a top United Nations human rights post. Mrs Robinson, Ireland's first woman president, has broken new ground since her election in 1990 by

Mary Robinson: Ground-breaking

President we ever had". He said she had "dissipated stereotypes" about the Irish and "reached out to the poor and to those who felt the political system didn't matter for them".

Mrs Robinson came to office just as Ireland achieved a new confidence. She has also been fiercely independent, and drew the wrath of the British Government when before the IRA ceasefire she met and shook hands with Gerry Adams in West Belfast.

Alan Murdoch

Appeal bid for Nepalese boy The attempt by a millionaire businessman to allow his

The attempt by a millionaire businessman to allow his Nepalese "son" to stay in Sritain is going to the Appeal Court.

Last November a High

Court judge upheld a deciion by the Home Secretary
Michael Howard to deport
Jay Khadka, 20, who fives in
with Richard Morley in his
mansion in the Forest of
Dean. The appeal may be
heard within a few weeks.

Mr Morley said: "We are very pleased to have this hearing. It is right and proper that this case should be heard during the administration of the current government. They are the people resoonsible for this chaos."

responsible for this chaos,"
Mr Morley made Jay his
adopted heir after what he
claims was a debt of honour
over the young man's late father, Basu. He saved Mr Morley's life in 1984 after while

on a trekking expedition.
Jay came to Britain six
years ago and was brought
up as an English gentleman.
Mr Morley has been fighting
to have him stay on compassionate grounds.

briefing

POLLUTION

Gummer sets 2005 target to eliminate smogs

The Government's final version of its National Air Quality strategy was published vesterday after three months of consultation, setting maximum levels for eight different types of health-threatening pollution which should never be exceeded after 2005.

But there was a catch; half of these targets are only provisional with the Government proposing to make no final decision until 1999. The Secretary of State for the Environment, John Gummer.

said the strategy would eliminate both summer and winter smogs. Many of the curbs are already being implemented, largely as a result of European Union laws. But achieving the targets for oxides of nitrogen, ozone, particulates (dangerous, microscopic airborne specks) and sulphur dioxide by 2005 will probably require more. Under the strategy, local councils in areas with bad air quality must club together to formulate action plans. There will also be regulations which allow fixed penalty fines, such as parking tickets, to be given to motorists whose cars fail exhaust emission checks when checked at the readwide.

when checked at the roadside.

The UK National Air Quality Strategy, available from the
Stationary Office bookshops, £17.85.

Nicholas Schoon

EARNINGS

Pay gap widens between regions

Campaigners say a survey on low pay proves that Britain is becoming an increasingly divided society.

The Low Pay Network claims in a report published today that the pay gap between workers in different regions has widened to more than £140 a week. Average earnings in Greater London were £455 a week, compared with £313 in Wales. And although average pay throughout the country was £351 last year, one in 10 manual male workers earned less than £173 a week and one in 10 manual

pay throughout the country was £351 last year, one in 10 manual male workers earned less than £173 a week and one in 10 manual women employees less than £119, said the report.

Average earnings in the regions included £365 a week in the South-east, £330 in the North-west, £326 in the South-west, £325 in

East Anglia, £324 in Scotland and the West Midlands and £315 in the North.

Peter Kelly, who co-wrote the report, said: "These findings reinforce the view that Britain is now a deeply divided society. While some workers continue to prosper, many others have been left to cope with the effects of our down-sized, casualised, flexible

HEALTH

Sailors steer clear of the dry life

The drunken sailor is a not just a character from a sea shanty - he is allow and unwell and living in Scotland.

is alive and unwell and living in Scotland.

A survey which followed 15,000 Royal Navy submariners for 30 years, found that the sailors' death rate from cirrhosis of liver was more than twice the national average and was particularly high in Scotland. Moreover, four times as many of them died from alcoholic poisoning as men in the population as a whole. Not

surprisingly, three times as many drowned.

Despite the incidence of cirrhosis, the submariners had a lower death rate than the male population as a whole because they they got less skin cancer, leukaemia and respiratory disease.

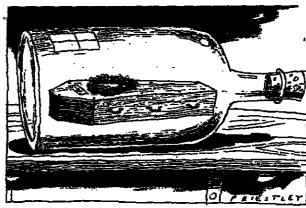
The study, published today in Occupational and Environmental Medicine, looked at a group who trained in both diesel and nuclear submarines between 1960 and 1979, and followed them until 1989.

A Name graduature mids Will have a faith contilled.

submarines between 1960 and 1979, and followed them until 1989.

A Navy spokesman said: We have a fairly sensible programme of education and guidance on alcohol. Although the death rate from cirrhosis was higher than average in the Navy in the 1970s, it evened out in the 1980s."

Annabel Ferriman



CIVIL SERVICE

Agency tables scheme abandoned

The Government has abandoned plans to draw up league tables of the "next steps" agencies which now employ two-thirds of Whitehall staff. It had hoped to draw comparative tables of the 130 agencies, but they are so diverse the task has proved impossible. However, in the second annual review of the performance of the agencies, eight have been identified as performing only half or less of the treating of the treating only half or less of the treating of the t

agencies, eight have been identified as performing particularly badly, meeting only half or less of the targets set by them.

Among the badly performing list are Companies House, the Fire Service College, the NHS Pensions Agency, the Patent Office, and the Student Awards Agency for Scotland. The best performing agencies, which met 80 per cent or more of their targets included the Central Office of Information and the UK Passport Agency.

Next Steps Agencies in Government, Review 1996, Stationery Office, £56

SCIENCE

Ending scrapie 'may be impossible'

Wiping out scrapie, the equivalent in sheep of "mad cow disease could prove almost impossible in the UK and Europe. That is because it is caused by an infectious agent rather than genetic defects, British scientists have found.

defects, British scientists have found.

If the disease was caused by genetic mutation, then it might prove possible to breed it out of flocks. But a comparison by a team from the Institute for Animal Health (IAH) in Edinburgh, of sheep from Australia and New Zealand — where no scrapie has been found for decades — with flocks from the UK found few significant differences in their genetic makeup.

Scientists had suggested that mutations of the PrP gene caused scrapic but the team found that the scrapic-free sheep from the Antipodes had the same mutations of the gene as the diseased British flocks.

The IAH concindes in today's Nature that the development of scrapie in sheep must require an additional factor, probably an infectious agent, making eradication in the Uk and Europe very difficult.

Charles Arthur

Lawrence award for good citizens

Philip Lawrence, the head teacher stabbed in the heart while trying to protect a pupil, was yesterday commemorated with the launch an annual good citizenship award for young people who give their time to community projects.

community projects.
His widow, Frances (pictured at the launch), the newsreader Trevor McDonald, and the Home Secretary Michael Howard joined together to invite applications from youngsters involved in race relations work, anti-crime and drugs schemes and other neighbourhood programmes.

Mr Howard said: "It is possible to take something positive and meaningful from this death of an exceptionally talented head teacher.

"We have a responsibility to

teach every child the difference

between right and wrong. Young people who do good work

between right and wrong. Young people who do good work should be recognised." he said. Philip Lawrence died in December 1995 when he was stabbed by a teenager, Learco Chindamo, outside St George's Catholic School, north-west London, as he tried to protect a pupil from a revenge attack.

After the conviction, Mrs. Lawrence launched a "moral manifesto" against violence in society. Yesterday, she told young people at the launch in London: "I am sure you understand that I feel a little sad

here today.

"He would never have stood back from injustice, he would do everything he could to put it right. He was the strongest of men and the gentlest of men."

Cash prizes of up to £1,000

that my husband Philip is not

men and the gentlest of men."

Cash prizes of up to £1,000 will be presented on the anniversary of Mr Lawrence's death. Applications for the Home Office awards, which are open to young people aged 11-20, close in September.

lands NS.00 OYES

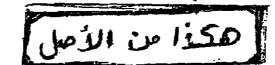
THE INDEPENDENT ABROAD

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NEWSPAPERS



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حكذا من الأصل

Judge orders anorexic girl to be locked up

new legal ground by ordering an anorexic teenager at risk of abuse and a suicide threat." starving to death to be detained for treatment - by force

The judge said he had "no and young people, where a doubt" that he had the power child's "best interests" are the not only to direct the 16-year-

old girl to a clinic, but also to rekindle the debate over judges' began worrying about her weight authorise the use of reasonable increasing willingness to over- at 12 and became anorexic at 14. In mitted to hospital after eating A High Court judge has broken hearing evidence of her eating disorder, subjection to sexual

While the judge, Mr Justice Wall, was acting under the ju-risdiction relating to children dominant criteria, the ruling will

force to keep her there after ride the wishes of patients who refuse treatment.

The ruling was made last week in a private hearing in the High Court family division, but the judge gave permission for it to be reported because of the important principles involved. The 16-year-old, who cannot

be identified for legal reasons,

She had also been a victim of long-term sexual abuse by a brother. Her history of eating problems included vomiting, taking laxatives and absconding from clinics where she was being treated. On one occasion she and had to be restrained from

throwing herself off a balcony.

no more than a few slices of cucumber in the previous 10 days.

The judge said doctors had reported that the girl had the ability suddenly to stop eating and drinking, putting herself at risk of collapse and death withthreatened to commit suicide in the following three to seven days. There was no doubt, Mr

isfied in addition that detention, essary, was an essential com-

ponent of the treatment. The case, brought by the girl's local authority although she is not in its care, may be of comfort to desperate parents faced with the trauma of an anoresic child who does not

the girl's best interests to be treated in the clinic. He was sal-ing will raise new fears about the increasing tendency of doctors using reasonable force if nec- to seek authority for their actions from the courts, and the preparedness of the courts to

While the focus has recently been on enforced Caesarean sections on unwilling pregnant women, the British Medical Association raised fresh fears

"We have general concerns about the use of reasonable force and how this is to be interpreted. In the past we have asked the Mental Health Commission to draw up guidelines

to help professionals." The BMA is in the process of considering new guidelines on children's consent to or refusal



Unmasked: survivor of King's Cross fire goes before judge to claim damages for scars that will never heal



He was the man in the mask, the King's Cross fire survivor so badly burned his face needed a shield against the world in order to heal.

skin grafts to recair the daments. He emerged bearing scars port (LRI).

which will never heal.

LRT admitted liability short-

His head is larger, carrying the fire-fused reminders of the

shirts four sizes bigger than beblocks of welded tissue and his mouth cannot form an O. His eyelids will not close.

"I am a different person Kwasi Afari Minta, now 43, now," he said yesterday as he endured a year in his plastic face appeared at the High Court in and underwent innumerable London to claim damages

he will never forget. He takes were injured at King's Cross station. It has paid out more than £4.5m in 110 claims of death, injury and property damage.

The worst of the many badlyburned survivors, he is representing himself before Mr Justice Toulson. The hearing Regional Trans -should begin in full today. .

Outside the court after yes LRT admitted liability short-terday's brief opening, Mr ly after the London Under-Minta, of Putney, south-west ground tragedy in which 31 London told how his horrific in-people died and dozens others juries have completely changed

his life. No longer able to play couldn't handle it. We had to the guitar or keyboards or sing (surgical tubes in his throat damaged that too), his career as Bar one disputed claim, Mr a studio musician ended in the Minta's is the last to be settled. as he left the Piccadilly Line

> Though he returned to the recording studio afterwards to finish work in progress, it was impossible. "I fell far short of ing able to do it."

> His marriage crumbled under the strain. "When [his then wife] came and saw me. she

break up," he said. He tried working as a minicab driver, but his appearance deterred passengers. Now he has re-trained at college in desktop publishing. "I just need to get something going," he

With a new wife Regina, and a son, Eugene, five, he has tried to re-build his life. But it is a very different one. "I don't want any public life, I feel uncomfortable with it. I would rather stay at home and guard myself against the staring," he

For it is the staring that makes his new existence intolerable. "People laugh, they don't know what has happened to you. My life has been un-bearable. If I had my own world, it would be better - a place where I don't have to meet

people."
Walking down the road, he will notice children stop, then point and giggle. "I have never got used to that, It's very awkward. Do you vanish or what?"

Ghanaian-born Mr Minta did not know the extent of his injuries for a long time. In fact. he was so badly burned he did not even feel the pain for two

days, he said. After passers-by heroically tore the burning clothes from his body, it was impossible to exit from King's Cross station and he had to take another tube train to neighbouring Farringdon station to receive first

Queen Mary's Hospital. Roe- to me. It is perpetual misery.

hampton, wearing the mask to keep his skin moist while his face was re-built. Only when he left the ward did he see his face in a mirror for the first time. -It was the worst thing on the

Nearly 10 years on since the fire tragedy, it is no easier to bear his injuries now than it was when he first emerged from hos-

"It has taken me almost 10 years to adjust to people." he He spent six months in said. But people don't adjust

The world loses a stage as Globe is buried for ever

David Lister Arts News Editor

The original site of Shakespeare's Globe Thearre in south London is to remain buried and all archaeological excavations prevented on the advice of English Heritage, the government's advisory body on preserving the nation's heritage.

The empty building above the remains of the original Globe is to be converted into luxury The decision to stop further

research on the Elizabethan theatre, the famous "Wooden" O", will appal Shakespeare students and academics around the Archaeologists and acade-

mics were planning excavations to determine the position, shape and size of the stage that Shakespeare worked on. This cannot now go ahead. Mark Rylance, the artistic di-

rector of the nearby new Shake-speare Globe Theatre, the reconstruction of the original. which will be opened by the Queen this summer, said yesterday he was stunned by the decision. He is writing to the Virginia Bottomley, the Heritage Secretary, who has rubberstamped the decision, and John Gummer, Secretary of State for the Environment.

Though his theatre, modelled on the assumed look of the original Globe, employs acad-



Original Globe: Archaeological excavations are to stop

emics and archaeologists to continue research into the original Globe to determine more about the building, its stage and setting neither he nor any of the academics was consulted.

Yesterday Zoe Wanamaker, the award winning actress and daughter of the late American director Sam Wanamaker who devoted much of his life to see-ing the new Globe built, was close to tears as she stood outside the fenced off site of the original Globe, surrounded by historians, academics and archaeologists who also wanted to

express their dismay publicly. The decision by English Heritage to refuse permission for

excavations was taken at the end of last year, but the organisation, headed by Sir Jocelyn Stevens, did not publicise it. Now Southwark borough council, acting on English Heritage's advice, has given planning permission to a private property company to convert the empty Grade 2 list-ed building, Anchor Terrace, that stands above the original

Globe, into luxury flats.

Acting on English Heritage advice, Southwark refers in its planning permission to "the permanent burial and commemoration" of the Globe.

The end to excavations and research into the theatre where Shakespeare worked and his a complete shock. Virginia Bot-

tomley should be very embarrassed by this. Archaeologists, academics, all of us should be furious. This is a bureaucratic decision which has slipped under the net without anyone really noticing. It's a betrayal of our beritage. And there's no real reason for it."

Mr Rylance added: "English Heritage has recommended that the original site of the Globe Theatre be buried permanently. It seems an odd way to preserve the heritage. What's buried down there is like oil or gold to us. The knowledge down there is like gold. The Globe is a

unique source of information. "We want to do keyhole surgery through the basement of

Anchor Terrace by drilling down. We wouldn't disturb anything." A spokeswoman for English Heritage said yesterday: "We are not saying the remains should be buried permanently. The remains are extremely fragile to excavate and they lie beneath a listed building which would require demolition. This does not mean they could not be excavated at a future time when there are improved tech-

Mr Rylance and his advisers deny that further excavations would mean demolishing the



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Cabbies to sell gift of the gab

the one about the German checuronics company, London Monday for a four-week trial, cabbies and mobile phones?" It carning more than £50 a week. is the larest stunt in an adverusing mad world and it is coming to the back seat of a black

Cab near you. Siemens, the German electronics company, plans to pay London's cabbies to use their notorious gift of the gan to pro-

mobile phone.

About 100 cabbies will be give have a good banter and rapport on a day's training on Friday in with their passengers.

Ere, guy nor, have you heard conversation. They are then due to start their sales pitch on football last night? Well I missed it, but I kept in touch

UK to other products if it clear that he was getting paid to

proves successful. A spokesman for Siemens' more to their passengers the just a fun way of getting to the company's latest model of consumer Cab drivers are considered friendly and already glass partition to show

the art of dropping information "If a conversation is an easy about the firm's latest phone into going, the driver could say they are then something like, Did you see the "If a conversation is already be receiving commission paymobile phones.

earning more than £50 a week. with the score by phoning my mobile business as "madvertising", could be extended across the would be expected to make it Metropolitan Police's Public endorse the product.

The driver would then imadvertising agency, Impact press his fare with facts and fig-FCA, said yesterday. This is ures available about the Siemens phone, and might even hand a model through the the

He said the drivers would not

ments if their fares then bought However, the plan could well run into opposition from the

Carriage Office, which governs London's taxi trade. Impact FCA said it was "in negotiations" with the Public Carriage Office about the proposal and was confident it

would be given the go-ahead. A Metropolitan Police spokesman said no formal application had been received and added drivers were not allowed to act as agents for

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LIFE CAN

BE MEASURED BY

HOW MANY

TIMES YOUR SOUL

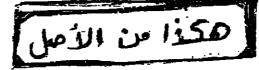
HAS BEEN

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Vouchers to force sale of homes for elderly

Scheme will turn councils into care purchasers

Glenda Cooper Social Affairs Correspondent

Vouchers could be used as part of the Government's plans for forcing local authorities to sell off their old people's homes in the most radical shake-up of social services for 25 years, Stephen Dorrell, the Secretary of State for

Health said yesterday.

Health said yesterday.

Attacked as "privatising grannies" by hostile Labour MPs, and "dogma gone mad" by carers groups, yesterday's White Paper is the beginning of a drive to transform local authorities into purchasers not providers of

Defending his plans Mr Dor-rell said vouchers for the elderly were being tried in Labour-controlled Bradford and he accused Chris Smith, Labour's Health spokesman, of "shooting his own supporters in the back".

The White Paper said the Government wished to encourage experimentation with other ways of reinforcing people's right to influence their choice of residential or nursing home. Some authorities are looking at voucher schemes as a way of extending and facilitating this right to choice. The Government intends to ensure that there are no legal obstacles to the use of vouchers in this way."

The White Paper also heralded tougher guidelines to stop children being allowed out of children's homes following compared to £246 in a voluntary

Government stands ready to act. either by issuing new guidance or changing the law if there is seen to be a further need to tip the balance more firmly in favour of adults. Social workers will also need to undergo further training if they wish to work with children.

The old people's homes sell-off was attacked by Mr Smith as "ideologically imposed". He said it would be cancelled by an incoming Labour government and Labour would legislate to establish a social services council to oversee standards of care.

Some 76,000 people living in 2.547 homes in England and Wales are likely to be affected. In future local authorities will only be able to provide care themselves if they can prove the private or voluntary sector cannot meet such needs. The White Paper also warns that it is the responsibility of individuals to plan to meet their own needs and that family and friends should be willing to act as carers.

It aims to drive down the cost of social services, which in the 10 years to 1994-5 saw spending rise 75 per cent in real terms. A survey commissioned recently by Mr Dorrell found that the average cost of a week's residential care in a council home in 1994-95 was £283,

dulged in drinking and under- A social services reform Bill age sex. would also bring in an inde-The White Paper says the pendent regulation of standards by local health and social services working together.

While independent care homes welcomed the move, unions and charities described it as "dogma gone mad", saying it signalled an end to the public service ethos. And, embarrassingly for the Government. the first of its programme of reviews of social services departments published today found that Stockport social services was "doing well" and providing "high quality services to meet the needs of very vulnerable

people". Evaluation of Stockport's services by the Audit Commission and the Department of Health showed that three out of four people were happy with them. "Not only does the idea of public service still exist, but people seem to like it."

Barry Hassell, chief executive of the Independent Health Association, said the paper was a "positive move for consumers taxpayers and providers alike".

Unison's national officer. John Findlay, said: "Worrvingly, these proposals open the in need of a range of home care support, including meals-onwheels, by faceless multinational companies who will never be able to replicate the attention and care that these popular local services provide."



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Twilight zone: Old people's homes are the latest target of the Government's privatisation drive

Wigan chief admits false transfer plan

Jack Robinson, chairman of Wigam rugby league club, yesterday confirmed that he had proposed setting up a fictitious transfer deal in a scheme to win damages from a local newspaner in a libel action.

that in a telephone conversation with Alfred Davies, chief executive of Leeds rugby league club, he had proposed that letters purporting to show that it had withdrawn an offer to buy Neil Cowie, the international forward, after an unfavourable article in the local Wigan Ob-

server newspaper.
The letters would be used in an action for damages against the newspaper, the proceeds of which he offered to share between the two clubs, even though transfer negotiations had never taken place.

Mr Robinson, 55, of Wigan has denied attempting to pervert the course of justice. He told the court he was acting on behalf of another director. John Martin, when he put the fake transfer proposal to Mr Davies, and he was always confident that Mr Davies would reject the proposal - which he did.

Mr Robinson told the jury that in February last year Wigan rughy league team had been surprisingly beaten by Salford in a Challenge Cup match. He gave

Charles Artinur Science Editor

build themselves.

harmful chemicals.

How do you build a micro-ma-

thousands of times smaller than

a pinhead? The answer, ac-

cording to American scientists,

is that you don't - you let them

lennium, such machines could

be injected into people to clean

up their blood, like the minia-

turised submarine seeking out

a blood clot in the 1960s film

Fanuastic Voyage, or to clear

Now, using techniques bor-

rowed from biology, a team at

Harvard University in Massa-

chusetts has taken the first step

towards such self-assembling

machines, by mixing together

different parts with the re-

quired shape, adding some pho-

tosensitive glue, and mixing

them until the shape they want-

ed appeared. A beam of ultra-

violet light then set the glue.

Sometime in the new mil-

Tiny machines

will be able to

build themselves

chine whose components are to put the pieces together with-

an interview to the Wigan Observer sports editor, Neil Barker, in which he criticised the fact players had been allowed to take a week's holiday in Tenerife im-mediately prior to the game.

This was followed by a report amages from a local newspa-er in a libel action. of Wigan players being involved in a "drunken binge" in the He told Bolton Crown Court
Tenerife hotel. The report mistakenly stated that one player involved was Neil Cowie. In fact, Cowie, son-in-law of John Martin, the Wigan director, was ski-

> Mr Robinson said Mr Martin had initiated a libel action against the newspaper without Cowie's knowledge, the player being on tour in Fiji.

In a letter to the newspaper, Mr Martin's solicitors claimed that Leeds had pulled out of a £150,000 transfer deal for Cowie as a result of the "binge" report. Mr Robinson said Mr Martin

had asked him to approach Mr Davies to provide material to support the fake transfer claim and he had agreed to do so though he was confident Mr Davies would reject the proposal.

He said he had agreed to make the approach because he was keen to retain Mr Martin's financial support of the club at that time.

Since then, there had been a boardroom split over the future of the Wigan ground, Central Park, and Mr Martin is no longer a director, he said. The case continues.

size of pollen grains and elec-tric motors smaller than a pin-

head - have previously faced the

same problem: it is very difficult

out dropping them. "In most

fabrication, you do things by fix-

ing them in place - welding or

screwing them to something.

They're systems which are metastable," said George

Whitesides of Harvard's chem-

systems, he said. That, though,

istry department.

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With a market value estimated at £40bn in the next 10 years, "nanotechnology" is attracting huge investment. But teams trying to make such systems – such as gears the nent, and triggers inflation.

Spring comes to the Tarquins

t is Spring here at the heart of Empire. The sun is re-flected from the white towers and buttresses of Westminster Abbey, or trapped in the carved crevices of the

decorations and gargoyles on the Houses of Parliament.
On College Green the bravest, ugliest tourists have shed
their overcoats and domed shorts. In Great Peter Street the tall, shabby-genteel Edwardian blocks of flats are sporting window-boxes of daffodils and crocuses. A bush of yellow forsythia peeks through the newly painted black railings that line the Queen Anne terrace of Lord

But what season is it in the building that lies - round the corner - in the shadow of the imposing baroquerie of St John's, Smith Square? Give me a moment to put my change and keys into a little polythene bag and pass through the metal detectors just inside the doors. Wait, while Venetia or Cordelia in the sky-blue cardigan and Hermes scarf, checks my credentials and hands me a sticky badge; while pin-striped, spotty Tarquin thrusts a bundle of press releases into my hand.

Here I am, inside a dark theatre. At the back is a projection and lighting booth, manned by three more Tarquin Round the walls are posters proclaiming the dangers of electing a Labour government. Extra Venetias and Tarquins appear at intervals along these walls or sit, singly, in various parts of the room. Music (Vivaldi perhaps) enters from

some hidden source. Near the front, seven or eight of Britain's finest political correspondents and editors huddle together for companionship. To their side and behind, watching them with zoological interest, is the diminutive (but perfect) Alan Duncan, MP for Rutland - seconded for special electiontime duties to the office of the Chairman of the Conservative Party.

Who now enters, accompanied by the straight, stiff figure of the President of the Board of Trade, Ian Lang. Mr Lang sat on a ramrod when young, and carries it still within - at

sat on a ramod when young, and carries it still within — at once a handicap and a source of inner strength.

But it is Dr Mawhinney who captures the eye. Just a few weeks ago he seemed to be bearing the sins of his party Dorian Gray style, in his face. That yellow skin, those darting fierce but frightened eyes, that odd, agonised revealing of the teeth — which might give a name to a new verb, to Mawhinney: to smile a ghastly smile.

Today – to my surprise – that death's head grin is gone. The smile is almost gentle. Mawhinney's adumbration of

The smile is almost gentle, Mawhinney's adumbration of the many sins of Labour is perfunctory and lacking in malice. He takes and evades questions with a resigned air. as if to say "you are journalists and must ask; I am a politician and must not answer. It is in our natures."

Though the ostensible purpose of the event is to unveil an unflattering letter sent by Mr President Lang to Mr Padraig Flynn - Irishman and Euro-Commissioner - no one (least of all Dr Mawhinney) is interested in the new threat to Britain's jobs posed by devils on the Continent. But there is a job to be done, and tomorrow Dr Mawhinney will be here with Peter Lilley, and the day after that with someone else.

Outside, beyond the metal detectors, men are digging up the road in Lord North Street. High up in the Great Peter Street flats an old lady with untidy hair leans out of her fifth-floor window and waters her ivy. A gaggle of schoolchildren passes down Millbank on their way to the Abbey. As Dr Mawhinney knows, Spring comes, life goes on - and governments fall.



Pipe dreamers: Members of the Lords and Commons Pipe and Cigar Smokers' Club preparing to light up outside Westminster yesterday in defiance of the campaign urging smokers to quit on No Smoking Day Photograph: Edward Sykes

Blair cleared over charge of involvement in fundraising

Christian Wolmar Westminster Correspondent

Sir Gordon Downey, the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards, has rejected a complaint from a backbench Tory MP that Tony Blair, the Labour leader. was personally involved in fundraising for his office expenses. The complaint, by David

Labour Party to raise money from large-scale donors on the basis that their names would not be known to Mr Blair or any

other senior party figures.

Mr Shaw argued that the trust was not "blind" in that Mr Blair had personally been trying to raise money by meeting potential donors at meals. He Shaw, MP for Dover, centred on said that the identity of donors

a "blind" trust set up by the was known to the Labour

However, yesterday, in a let-ter to Mr Shaw, Sir Gordon said that Mr Shaw's evidence "consisted only of newspaper or hearsay reports of what has allegedly been said to journalists". He concluded that "unless direct evidence is provided to support the allegation that Mr Blair has been personally involved in fund raising for the Labour Leader's Office Fund, he would tell the dards and Privileges that there

was no case to answer. Sir Gordon also took the unusual step of criticising the editor of the Sunday Times, John Witherow, who alleged, in an editorial last Sunday, that he was "prevaricating" over the investigation. Sir Gordon denies this and says "there is no truth in the suggestion that I failed to inform the committee of the provi-

sional advice I had given to Mr

Blair's office fabout the blind trust]" or that he was criticised by the committee for having failed to provide the advice. Sir Gordon has asked the newspa-

per "to consider a correction". He says, however, that the rules on contributions to the administrative expenses of both government and Opposition frontbenchers needs "to be

The Labour campaigns spokesman Brian Wilson weler had any doubt that this would be the outcome. The whole operation was a smear job by Mr Shaw, licensed by Tory Central Office."

Last Tuesday, Mr Shaw attempted to keep the issue going by tabling a further set of comlaints to Sir Gordon about similar trusts run by the offices of the Labour frontbenchers John Prescott, Margaret Beckett, Gordon Brown and Robin Cook.

MPs seek tax on car parks out of town

Nicholas Schoon **Environment Correspondent**

MPs have called for a tax on out-of-town car parking spaces to stop shoppers deserting traditional town centres for green-

field superstores. Several pressure groups had proposed such a tax, which could raise hundreds of millions of pounds a year. But to have an all-party House of Commons select committee back the idea gives it a new respectability. Neither of the main parties

would contemplate such a tax in the run-up to the election. But the recommendation from the Environment Select Committee in its latest report on shopping centres puts it firmly on the

agenda after polling day.
The MPs said: "We recommend that the Government consider either introducing a levy or allowing local authorities to assess car parks for business rates." At present they are not rated, in or out of town.

The committee chairman. Andrew Bennett, said there was a wide gap between car parking charges in out-of-town shopping and leisure centres and those in the town centre. When I go into the middle of Stockport to shop it costs me 80p while if I use the new outof-town John Lewis store at Cheadle its free," he said.

Many town centre car parks were owned by local councils and the charges had become an important source of revenues. 'It's not easy for a cashstrapped council to cut those charges to compete with out-oftown developments."

The tax would be paid by the wner or operator of the outof-town car park, who could choose whether or not to pass it on to customers in higher parking charges. It would apply to developments already built as well as all future ones, covering the hundreds of thousands of out-of-town car parking spaces 20 years. The aim would be to encourage more use of public transport and town centre facilities and discourage the use of greenfield sites which is eating away at the countryside and encouraging more and

longer car journeys. The MPs' recommendation opens a debate about the level of tax, whether councils or central government should collect it, and exactly what kind and lo-

cation - edge or out-of-town developments - it should apply to.

The growth in hig out-oftown shopping centres has slowed because the Government has changed planning policies to oppose them and hecause so much has already been built that some retailers are approaching saturation point in some areas. None the

less, there are dozens which

have been granted planning permission by local councils but not yet built But Mr Bennett said leisure developments such as multiplex cinemas and bowing alleys were now rapidly expanding out of town. "These represent the latest threat to existing town centres as places where people not only shop but live, work and relax," he said. He was de-



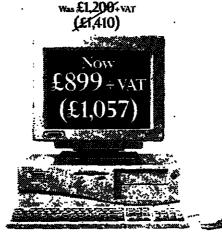
Secretary of State for the Environment, recently rejected Virgin's plans for a 10-screen cinema at an out-of-town site near Eastleigh in Hampshire. The MPs also called for tax

relief on companies' contributions towards approved town centre improvement plans.

Their report was welcomed by the Civic Trust and the Council for the Protection of Rural England.

Tony Burton, for the council, said: "If we're to learn anything from the environmental damage caused by out-of-town shopping, it is that stronger carrots and sticks are needed to steer development into towns and cities where it can contribute towards urban renewal and slow the growth in traffic.

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Labour's glitterati party in style

Fran Abrams Political Correspondent

Labour's great and glamorous gathered at the Hilton Hotel in London last night for a £500-ahead fundraising dinner, which was expected to raise up to a quarter of a million pounds for the party's election effort.

Among the 450 guests who paid to attend the function were Bianca Jagger, Sinead Cusack, and Lord Attenborough, Melvyn Bragg, a regular at such events, was also there along with the DJ Simon Mayo, comedian Stephen Fry and actor Paul McGann. A further 120 officials, MPs and donors dined at the party's

The dinner was the fifth such annual event held by Labour, and was the biggest so far. Last year's raised £200,000 after Eric Cantona's football shirt was auctioned for £17,000.

Both Tony Blair and John Prescott were scheduled to make speeches, while Richard Wilson, star of BBC's One Foot in the Grave, hosted an auction. Mr Blair's wife, Cherie, and Mr Prescott's wife, Pauline, were both at the dinner.

Despite Tony Blair's recent attempts to distance himself from the "luvvie" fraternity, the turnout was better than

Among the guests from busi-ness were Wahid Ali, head of the television company Planet 24, Bill Hamilton, director of public affairs for Safeway and Alec Recd, founder of Reed Personnel Services.

Mirror Group Newspapers, part-owner of The Independent. was one of the sponsors.

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HALIFAX	INTERNATIONAL MA	NX GOLD
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£50,000+	5.80%	5.65%
£25,000+	5.70%	5.56%
£10,000+	5.15%	5.03%
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Mayhew bows out ducking tough questions

Alan Murdoch Dublin

Declaring his time as Secretary of State for Northern Ireland "the five best-spent years of my career", Sir Patrick Mayhew yesterday glossed over criticism of his handling of opportunities

Irish Conference meeting with body takes on this kind of thing had missed the chances pre-Irish ministers if he had been a failure, he said: "It is for other people and not for me to decide

about those matters." Sir Patrick recalled that he had asked to be put in the post and was "very glad" he had been given it. He added: 'Now, nearly presented by the peace process. five years later I am just as glad

and expects to be able to pat himself on the back."

It had been a rocky Anglo-He hoped he had helped the Irish marriage with Dublin nepeople of Ireland as a whole to come to terms with their angotiators frequently convinced that he felt the Irish race was cient history, to cease to look somehow made up solely of back and to look forward". Unionists. But that was all for-Then Sir Patrick bade farewell gotten yesterday. Before leavjust as questions began getting ing, Irish ministers presented Asked after his final Anglo- that I was given the chance. No- tougher on how his government

sented by the 1994 ceasefires.

ancestors, a book of photos of Irish antiquities and a bottle of 40-year-old Midleton Very Rare

مكذا من الأصل

The Dublin meeting dealt with Dublin's concerns over British handling of the North report on the marching season. security issues and the detention him with essays on Cork, where of Roisin McAliskey.

First shots fired in dirty war for Tory leadership

Anthony Bevins Political Editor

A "dirty war" for the Conservative leadership erupted yesterday after the Express carried a front-page report alleging that Baroness Thatcher had joined a secret campaign to back Michael Portillo.

The report was later repudiated by Julian Seymour. "di-rector. Lady Thatcher's private office", who said it was "malicious nonsense and entirely without foundation".

It had been alleged that staff in Lady Thatcher's office had circulated a dossier containing pen portraits of Conservative election candidates, "to help the Defence Secretary canvass support". John Whittingdale. Conservative MP for Colchester South and Maldon, one of Lady Thatcher's former aides and the alleged link between her and the Portillo campaign, said: "This story is a total fabrication and unerly without foundation.

"It is clearly designed to cause damage to Lady Thatcher. Michael Portillo and to the Conservative Party. Lady Thatcher's office denied there was any truth in it vesterday, and I am astonished that the Express

been told it was untrue."

should see fit to print it, having

and that he would be her cur- political editor reported. rent favourite in any contest for the succession to John Major.

But the current leadership campaign has to stay underground because it depends on an inbuilt assumption - widely shared among some contenders - that the Conservatives are heading for election defeat on

1 May. As the letter from the former leader's office said yesterday: "Lady Thatcher gives her full support to the Prime Minister and will work for victory by the Conservative Party at the forthcoming general election."

But the fact that the covert campaign is being fought is as evident from the dirty tricks as it is from the jockeying for position by potential contenders.

A report in yesterday's Eastom Daily Press, the regional newspaper that serves Gillian Shephard's Norfolk South-West constituency, repudiated a weekend newspaper report that she had decided not to stand in a leadership contest because she wanted to spend more time with her family

"Friends of the Norfolk MP yesterday poured scom on a

It has been known for some had ruled herself out of standvears that Lady Thatcher was a great admirer of Mr Portillo. ership. the Eustern Daily Press

> Using the Westminster code that is commonly used to disguise the person in question, the report added: "Sources close to the SW Norfolk MP said yesterday that the [weekend] article seemed to have something to do with furthering the cause of the 35-year-old Welsh Secretary [William Hague]."

> The only contender who has so far stood against John Major for the leadership, John Redwood, yesterday main-tained his remorseless pace for the next challenge with a speech in which he washed his hands of the current crisis over the Meat Hygiene Service and the state of the country's abattoirs.
> "As a minister," Mr Redwood

said, "I unsuccessfully opposed the birth of the national Meat Hygiene Service.

I thought it better to leave the responsibility with the local authorities.

"They are responsible for food safety outside the abattoir. why not let them remain responsible for the abattoirs as well? Again, the new national service has proved to be both dearer and less effective than Westminster rumour that she advertised at the time.

Major's manifesto will attack unions

Chief Political Correspondent

Tough curbs on trade unions, allowing customers of privatised utilities to sue for loss of service. are to be included in the Tory election manifesto, Ian Lang, the President of the Board of

Trade, said yesterday. The proposals, some of the toùghest employment legislation since the Second World War, provoked outrage among among some Tory supporters.

Senior Tory sources said the unions could be stripped of immunity from legal action if a as a step too far. court decided the effects of the strike were "dispropor-

The notice period for strikes could be doubled to 14 days aiter ballots in which a majority of those entitled to vote would be required to make the strike

posals as "vindictive and smallminded". It could leave unions open to injunctions and fines for contempt of court with sequestration of assets.

The Green Paper made it clear that strikes last year af-fecting the fire service, London Underground and the postal service would have come within the scope of the anti-strike

trades unions and raised doubts the unions that "the basic trade union laws of the 1980s will not be repealed - there will be no Government had decided to return to no-ballot strikes, flypress ahead with the plans, ing pickets or secondary action outlined in a Green Paper last or any of the rest of it." But year, which proposed that Labour will attack the next wave of Tory employment laws

> Last night, Labour reinforced that message at its gala dinner in London. We have changed. And it simply defies logic to think that we would go through such radical change in creating new Labour, merely to slip back if we win."

Describing himself as an

"eternal warrior" against com-placency, Mr Blair told colleagues not to take victory for granted. And he assured businessmen at the dinner that Labour would not go "back to

the old ways" in government. Meanwhile, Mr Lang yesterday wrote to the European Social Affairs Commissioner, Padraig Flynn, to protest against a threat to tighten the EU rules on redundancy, Tony Blair this week told following the decision by

> Belgium. Mr Flynn attacked the threatened closure and told the European Parliament that there was a balance to be struck between companies' economic needs and the rights of the

But in a clear appeal to Tory Euro-sceptics, Mr Lang attacked the plan to extend work-ers' rights. "It is in the interests of all of us in Europe that you look for ways to remove restrictions on employment, rather than to increase them," Mr Lang said.



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Speaker's latest ruling: no bleeping in the House

Chief Political Correspondent

The Speaker of the Commons, Betty Boothroyd, yesterday act-ed to stop the intrusion of message pagers in the chamber of the House. She intervened to stop

Labour MPs jumping to the messages sent them by party spin doctors.

Miss Boothroyd told MPs that she could not object to "an instrument that vibrates, but she did not want the curse of modern living, the bleeper, going off in the middle of Prime

Although her ruling falls short of a complete ban on MPs' pagers in the Commons, it is in-tended to draw a line under their use.

It follows the outrage caused when Brian Wilson, a Labour MP and a senior member of Peter Mandelson's campaign team, appeared to be reading a pager message at the Despatch Box, when he intervened on Tuesday to protest against a Tory MP for failing to declare an interest at Prime Minister's ques-

Conservative MPs accused Minister's questions.

She warned MPs that anyone reading a message from one of the gadgets would be told to

barrass the Government. With MPs on both sides being tightly controlled by the spin doctors, the use of the pager raised the prospect of MPs using the devices to improve their verbal jousting across the

Miss Boothroyd's ruling means that in future, MPs will have to return to the tried and trusted system of sending and receiving messages on paper, if they wish to read them in

But MPs may be well advised to play safe by leaving their pagers where they are sup-posed to hang their hats, and their swords, in the members'

lason Bennetto

Crime Correspondent

Ann Widdecombe, the Prisons Minister, vesterday defended the arrival of Britain's first floating jail, which is due to be moored off the Dorset coast this morning, and predicted that local residents would eventually grow attached to it.

hased, have been anything but embusiastic, and the local councit has refused it planning permission. The Prison Service is appealing to the Department of the Environment near Thursday to over-ride the council.

Ms Widdecombe said yesterday: "I do understand why it is that people sometimes get

concerned about having prisons permanently near them, though oddly enough when we then try to close down the prison, they always resist it.

"If we do manage to get that ship up and running, the pop-ulation which has resisted it arriving will resist it when we say we don't need it any more." HM Prison Weare, formerly

So far the chizens of Portland, the Resolution, has been shipped where the floating prison will be over from New York as an emergency measure to deal with the jail over-crowding crisis. The Prison Service director

general, Richard Tilt, said that if the appeal for the ship to be moored at Purland failed, the service had identified other potential sites where it could go, subject to planning approval. He declined to say where.

ernors' Association annual meeting in Buxton, Derbyshire, Ms Widdecombe rejected suggestions that the spiralling jail population constituted a crisis.

The association said it was disappointed by Ms Widde-combe's speech. We are deeply disturbed by her belief that a rising prison population is a factor in reducing crime rates. Hers is a simplistic and potentially damaging approach to the management of criminal justice," a PGA statement

Last Friday, the prison pop-ulation in England and Wales stood at 59,156, just a little short of the total capacity of 60,013. The jails are expected to be full in about two weeks.

Prospects for black barristers get worse

Lawyers attack 'appalling level of unequal treatment'

Patricia Wynn Davies Legal Affairs Editor

Urgent action to stamp out discrimination against aspiring black barristers was called for yesterday in the wake of a sharp increase in the failure rate of the Bar examination.

in an analysis of pass rates over the past four years, the Society of Black Lawyers said the disparity between blacks and whites represented "an appalling level of unequal treatment". Latest figures for the Bar's "clearing house" scheme. for matching would-be pupil barristers to chambers. likewise showed a pattern of continuing racial discrimination. the society said.

A breakdown of pass rates at the Inns of Court School of Law - until this autumn the monals course - shows failure





rates for ethnic minority students of 29.9 per cent in 1992-93, 20.4 in 1993, 25.4 in 1994-95 and 42.1 in 1995-96, almost double the previous year.

While the failure rate for white candidates also almost



doubled from 10.2 per cent in 1994-95 to 18.9 per cent in 1995-96. Peter Herbert, the society's chairman, said: "This has a far more dramatic effect on black students because we

haven't got the numbers there,

and the failure rate is still double for black people." Following the damning 1994 Barrow report into racism at the school, which found that ethnic

nancially handicapped", the former governing body, the Council for Legal Education, promised to make an extra £500,000 available, improve minority students felt "isolated, tutor-student ratios and provide inadequate and socially and fiextra teaching space. It remains

to be seen whether the opening up of the course to other universities and law schools in September will make a difference.

Mr Herbert claimed black students had been receiving less-favourable treatment in

terms of the provision of any extra nelp that might be needed, contributing to loss of morale. He said he suspected that examiners expected answers that could favour candidates whose

improved since the

the ranks of judges

ons such as

remaining largely

Patricia Scotland

member of the

Main photograph:

Kevin Lamarque

Lord Taylor

(top), barrister and

and barristers

black students continued to be-lieve they were identifiable to markers despite an anonymous numbering system. Ethnic mi-nority students were also likely to suffer in oral tests, where Colour Bar? Little has marking was subjective.

The Bar's clearing house

scheme for pupillages, which places almost 70 per cent of pupil barristers, showed a pattern of continuing racial dis-crimination at the Bar, Mr Herbert said. For 1995-96, there were 1,378

applications from whites, who secured a total of 839 offers, accepting a total of 447. Asians made 143 applications, secured 57 offers and accepted 35. For those of African or Caribbean origin, 97 applications pro-duced 21 offers, of which 13 were accepted. The society has called on the Bar Council to make equality of treatment a priority for the coming year.

The chairman of the council's race relations committee, Lincoln Crawford, who is black said: "I am absolutely determined to get to the heart of this. The Barrow inquiry found no firm evidence of discrimina

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Gulf veterans harassed over health claims

lan Burrell

Earl Howe, the Defence Minister, has been told that Gulfwar veterans have been intimidated and followed home by plainclothes investigators.

The veterans, campaigning over Gulf war syndrome, believe they are being harassed as "subversives" by officials because of their attempts to find out what

happened to them in the war. One of those who has been targeted is Angus Parker, who served as a technician for a secret Gulf unit working for scientists from Porton Down. the chemical defence estab-

Mr Parker, who is now showing the symptoms of Gulf war syndrome, tipped off the Commons Defence Select Committee about the work of his unit.

Soon afterwards, he visited London to be assessed by Army loctors. As he left the Henry VIII hotel, Bayswater, on the morning of 5 February, he was followed into a nearby cafe by a man in a suit.

The man, who knew Mr Parker was going for a medical, asked the veteran whether he intended to make any more information public, and refused to identify himself.

An argument ensued and

lowing Mr Parker outside his home in Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Mr Parker, who suffers from respiratory problems, unsuc-cessfully tried to chase the man, who had a military-style haircut

and a southern accent. Earl Howe has agreed to meet Mr Parker at Westminster today, when the matter will be discussed along with other grievances regarding Gulf war syndrome. "We are seeking medical recognition of our condition and we are being tarred sives," said Mr Parker. "We are fine upstanding members of society, willing to fight and die with the same brush as subverfor our country, and look what

is happening to us." Dr David Clark, Labour's defence spokesman, said: "I am alarmed that the Gulf vets are being harassed in such a frightening manner. It appears that the Government are trying to hide something even now. Instead of harassing these people, the Government ought to help them find out what's wrong

with them Dr Clark has also been given details of the alleged harassment of a former Army private from North Wales. The man claims that he was threatened by a ton bluow odw nen of auong identify themselves but knew of the interrogator left. Then 10 his campaign for compensation days later, he reappeared, fol-

DAILY POEM

Song

By Christina Rossetti

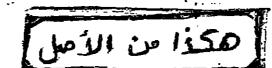
When I am dead, my dearest, Sing no sad songs for me; Plant thou no roses at my head Nor shady cypress tree: Be the green grass above me With showers and dewdrops wet: And if thou wilt, forget.

shall not see the shadov shall not feel the rain: I shall not hear the nightingal Sing on, as if in pain: And dreaming through the twiligh That doth not rise nor set. Hapiy I may remember And haply may forget.

'Song" is one of five works by Christina Rossetti in Victorian Love Poems, edited by A Norman Jeffares (Kyle Cathie, £8.99). This new anthology covers neglected writers as well as all the familiar names, while its inclusive definition of "Victorian" verse brings in literary figures as diverse as John Clare and James Joyce.



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Cash to train jobless siphoned off in frauds

Education Correspondent

Franchilent claims for funding far, only 41 have been investiphantom students by unscrupulous training companies have contributed to £18m of misspeut government funds in the last two years, a public spending body revealed yes-

The Public Accounts Committee condemned as "de-plorable" evidence that money for training schemes to help job-less people back to work had been irregularly siphoned off by private training firms. Citing cases in which com-

panies claimed funding for nonexistent students using forged qualification certificates, or for real students who had not yet qualified, the committee voiced concern that the risk remained of public money being wrongly paid out - despite attempts to clamp down.

Although the Department for Education and Employment, which funds work training, estimated it had reduced incorrect and uncertain payments from £9.4m in 1994-95 to £8.6m last year, the committee said the figure was still too high and called for action to cut

1991 by the Middlesex Hospi-

tal in London showed that

blood products provided to pa-

tients by the the Irish Blood

Transfusion Service Board (BTSB) were contaminated

But the report, handed by the

Irish cabinet this week to the Director of Public Prosecutions, found the BTSB's response to

the London findings "com-

pietely inadequate and non-

about the BTSB's decision to not to recall contaminated

products until February 1994.

Recent figures show that 970 mothers with with rhesus pos-

itive babies receiving anti-D blood plasma treatment and 210

with hepatitis C.

75 cases of suspected and alleged false claims for training funding logged since 1995. So gated, and just one of those referred to the police.

Government funding for ample, County Durham TEC work training programmes reaches training providers which include private firms local authorities and voluntary bodies, via 76 training and enterprise councils (local companies which contract out government training work).

To claim funding, training providers have to give TECs records of trainees attendance and photocopies of certificates proving they have gained National Vocational Qualifications. However, TECs are allowed to claim money back from the DFEE up to four months before they receive the providers' evidence, to help cash flow.

The DFEE acknowledged the system was at risk of abuse by providers, but told the Public Accounts Committee that experience had shown only 5 per cent of claims needed to be adjusted. In a system involving some 5:000 training providers in 200,000 training locations, it was "difficult to prevent individuals

who wished to perpetuate ir-It also urged the DFEE to regularities from doing so," the speed up its investigation of the department said.

actions among those who had

tice Finlay condemned what he

called the BTSB's "total refusal

to face the consequences of

what had been done" in 1976.

days before her case was due to

hundreds of others had been infected since the mid-Seventies.

Shortly before her death last

October she accepted a settle-

Following claims of ministe rial negligence. Brendan Howl-in, health minister from 1992 to

ment of £175,000.

The inquiry followed the High Court action of Brigid Mc-Cole, who died last October

received the anti-D product. In a damning passage Mr Jus-



awarding bodies did the same. Noteworthy: The saxophonist Holly Slater, 1996 Young Jezz Musician of the Year, playing at Ronnie Scott's yesterday

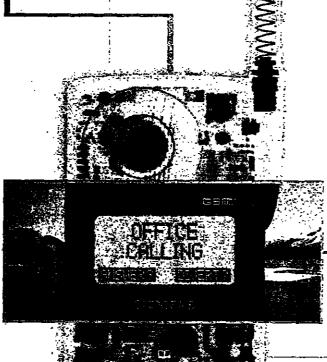
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in connection with the case.

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they were told it was contami- who in 1977 failed to seek an innated with the hepatitis Cvirus. vestigation after being told by Test results sent to Dublin in Dublin's Mater Hospital of re-

baemophiliacs were infected 1994, said yesterday that trying with hepatitis C from contam- to blame the minister was "like

The report, by Mr Justice for the fire". But he said "the government as a whole will have to take its share of the responsion payments in 1976-77 and between 1991

and 1994 on senior BTSB staff, are expected to exceed £100m.

Talknology from

Hussein vents his anger at Israel

Patrick Cockburn

The long paragraphs in the three-page letter from King Hussein of Jordan to Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli Prime Minister, almost vibrate with rage as he lists his grievances. He says: "My distress is genuine and deep over the accumulating tragic actions which you have ini-

tiated at the head of the gov-

emment of Israel, making peace

- the worthiest objective of my

life - appear more and more like

a distant clusive mirage."
In the course of the letter, sent on 9 March. King Hussein even wonders if Mr Netanyahu would have ordered Israeli warplanes to shoot him down last week if he had tried to pilot the plane flying Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian leader, from Amman to Gaza. The Israelis had refused to allow the flight to enter Israeli airspace. King Hussein asks: "Would vou have ordered my fellow pilots in the

me forcibly from landing or

Publication of the text of the letter from the Arab ruler previously considered the most sympathetic to Mr Netanyahu comes as Israel faces increasing international isolation. The latest blow came when the US agreed to attend a meeting next Saturday in Gaza of European and Arab diplomats, summoned by Mr Arafat to discuss the impact of the Oslo accords on the Israeli decision to build a Jewish settlement at Har Homa, and al on the West Bank.

Showing a consideration for the Palestinian leader's feelings not often shown by US officials in the past, Nicholas Burns, the US State Department spokesman, said: "Chairman Arafat obviously feels the need to talk to friendly countries around the world, and that's appropriate." Edward Abington, the US Consul in East Jerusalem, will attend the Gaza meeting, which was condemned by Israel.



State visit: Benjamin Netanyahu in Moscow yesterday. The Israeli Prime Minister said he was baffled by King Hussein's attacks Photograph: AF

Martin Indyk, the American ambassador, denied vesterday there was any crisis in relations between the US and Israel.

The anger of King Hussein is in sharp contrast to the warming of relations between Israel and Jordan which culminated in the peace treaty between them signed in 1994. Even when Mr Netanyahu was elected last year, King Hussein appears to

have thought that Jordan could tremendous resistance from act as a bridge hetween him and some of my own constituency. I the Arab world. But when Mr have chosen the path of the Netanyahu refused his request Oslo process." But the Jordanian monarch makes clear that he no "as a personal favour" to fly Mr Arafat back to Gaza, King Huslonger accepts this. He says: "I sein slammed the phone down. The Israeli leader, who has frankly cannot accept your re-peated excuse of having to act the been visiting Russia, says in re-sponse to King Hussein that he way you do under great duress and pressure." He accuses Mr is "baffled by the personal attacks Netanyahu of breaking a promise against me". He says: "Despite

In January, King Hussein was

considered to have played a critical role in arranging an agree-ment between Israel and the Palestinians over the partial Israeli withdrawal from Hebron. He now asks why Israel was deliber-ately humiliating its Palestinian partners and why the present phase of withdrawal from the West Bank was so insignificant. The peace treaty with Jordan

was considered one of the main gains made by Israel as a result of the Oslo accords. He will vis-President Bill Clinton in Washington this week and presumably feels the US is itself angry enough with Mr Netanyahu not to object the King's attack on him. He also calculates that his manifesto against the Israeli

US army mired in race scandal

Rupert Comwell
Washington

The US Army's inquiry into sex-ual harassment has been thrown into turmoil and racial controversy by claims from white female recruits that they were pressured into making rape charges against their training officers - all of them black.

It has been four months since what appeared one of the gravest scandals in army history erupted, with allegations of systematic sexual harassment at the Aberdeen training base in Maryland. From army installations in the US and around the world, thousands of women soldiers used a special hot line set up by the Pentagon to complain of molestation and persecution by male colleagues.

Now, however, it seems a good measure of the original case may be fiction. Five women from Aberdeen, where eight supervisors have been charged with sex crimes, say that despite intense pressure from investigators, they would not make accusations of rape. Whatever took place, therefore, was con-sensual - "fraternisation" in

army parlance. But such relations between a soldier and a superior are forbidden, and, as Kathryn Leming, one of the women, told a press conference, "They told me that under army rules it was con-sidered rape. They pushed me and pushed me and tried to make me say rape, but I wouldn't do it because it wasn't the truth."

As a result, the army now has two controversies on its hands: one of sexual harassment and the other race.

The press conference was organised by the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People, and Kweise Mfume, the chairman, is demanding an independent in-vestigation of how the army conducted the inquiry.

The Pentagon dismisses any auggestion of racial motivation, while its investigators demy they ever dangled incentives before the women to secure their cooperation. But in terms of muddying the investigation and embarrassing the army hierarchy, the damage has been done.

Accident sends Japan's nuclear future up in smoke

Richard Lloyd Parry

In the middle of August 1945, refugees from the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, who had lived through the fire storm and the collapsed buildings. egan dying of a strange disease. ome were dead within weeks; many

lingered on for years or even decades before succumbing. They were the first mass victims of radiation sickness, and it was their plight which instilled in the Japanese a profound and enduring horror of radioactivity.

Compared to memories like these, the fire and explosion at the Tokai nuclear reprocessing plant on Tuesday

ers at the facility, which packs liquid waste into barrels of asphalt, were exposed to "an extremely tiny amount" of radiation, less than one five-hundredth of the maximum annual exposure. There was no significant akage outside the plant, and within 10 minutes radiation levels had re-

turned to normal. But the psychological impact on a country increasingly intolerant of its government's big nuclear ambitions

Since Hiroshima, a series of nu-

contaminated in the Pacific after sailing through the fall-out from an American nuclear test. Nuclear phobia reached a peak af-

ter the Chernobyl disaster in 1986, and when China and France resumed nuclear testing two years ago there were demonstrations all over the country. But this instinctive aversion is complicated by another deepseated hang-up: Japan's dependence on outside sources of energy.

With few natural resources of its vn, Japan imports almost all its fuel clear accidents in Japan have only served to reinforce distrust of ra-dioactive technology. In 1954 a boat oil, and successive governments have been painfully aware of their vul-nerability to war, global price rises,

and the obstruction of shipping routes. At the time of the 1973 oil crisis, nearly 90 per cent of Japan's energy supplies came from abroad. Since then, the government has made a concerted effort to become more

self-sufficient. Nuclear plants provide Japan with 34 per cent of its electricity and the proportion is scheduled to rise to 42 per cent by 2010, with an ambitious programme of reactor construction quiet coastal areas. Objections from residents have traditionally had little effect on the decisions of bureaucrats in Tokyo but in the past 18 months a mixture of official incompetence and vigorous local camwere dropping a controversial plan to build another reactor after strenuous local objections.

the Monju fast-breeder reactor suffered a serious leakage of sodium coolant. The leak was not radioactive but the Power Reactor and Nuclear Fuel Development Corporation (Donen) dug itself into ever deeper trouble when it was shown to have suppressed or distorted the facts.

Last August residents in the small town of Maki, on the Japan Sea, held Japan's first referendum on a plan to build a reactor: 60 per cent of them rejected it, and the project has been shelved. On Tuesday, while the fire was burning at Tokai, Kyushu Elec-

How could a fire which was discovered at 10am be allowed to smoul-

der for so long that it caused an explosion at 8pm? It was three hours before the authorities were told that radiation had leaked - if evacuation had been necessary, this delay could have been deadly.

The Tokai fire will give further im-

petus to grass-roots opposition. Already yesterday environmental groups

and politicians were pointing out

how little Donen seemed to have

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Rebels band together to demand talks

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Emma Daly Kucove, Albania

Even as a second day of talks on the make-up of a caretaker government continued in Tirana yesterday, rebellious civilians in southern Albania moved to shore up the substantial gains of the uprising.

For the first time since the crisis began in January, the unrest reached the capital, with shots fired at assailants who broke into Tirana's military academy. The towns of Saranda, Gjirokaster, Tepelena, Berat and Kucove announced the formation of a national salvation committee, and are demanding a seat at the talks in Tirana and a role in the new government.

A separate committee for Vlora, cradle of the uprising has been promised a place in the administration. The appointment of Bashkim Fino, an opposition Socialist from Gjirokaster, as prime minister may be a sig-nificant step but has done nothing to satisfy the rebels' main demands: the resignation of President Sali Berisha and repayment of money lost in cor-

rupt investment schemes.
We are trying to co-ordinate all our activities and operations on the political level," said Abaz Gorani, deputy chairman of the Kucove committee, "We will also have a military side, to co-ordinate our actions if soldiers or supporters of Berisha attack. We do respect Bashkim Fino," he continued, "but we are not happy with any of the political parties. We do not believe in any of them."

The issue at present for the politicians negotiating in Tirana is which party is to control the powerful Interior Ministry and the Shik secret police.

diate concerns are to restore order and strengthen defences. Gunmen along the main road south to Kucove - where locals seized 23 elderly MiGs - and the town of Berat have built roadblocks in the past 24 hours. In Berat the new police chief, Ilir Helmesi, asked citizens to surrender weapons looted from the military, but few responded.

Miltiadh Vevecka, a doctor at Berat hospital, said: "Only a few runs have been turned in, mostby people who didn't know how to use them and who therefore damaged them," He was trying to answer the question vexing diplomats and journalists: how to bridge the gap be-tween party members talking in Tirana and the armed citizens who proclaim disdain of all politicians. "The towns' salvation committees will win credibility for the way they restore order, by stopping thieves and the like." Dr Vevecka said. The new government will win credibility if the national sal-

vation committee is part of it." But security must first be assured at a domestic level. In the village of Ardonice, between two government-controlled towns, men raided a camp for weapons, with what seemed to be army collusion.

Soldiers told us they would not fight if attacked; half an hour later, they were. They took cover in an olive grove, leaving the Shik and traffic police to mount a counter-attack. The two parties exchanged fire. though it was inaccurate, or aimed at the sky. Within 15 minutes it seemed honour had been satisfied, and the police pulled back, apparently having driven off the interlopers. In Tirana, television cam-

eraman filmed three men walking from the military academy with rifles and ammunition. A few shots sent passers-by running, but the relaxed bearing of the thieves, in a city policed under a state of emergency, led locals to conclude they were Democratic Party activists. Mr Berisha will need their help if he is to survive the crisis.

So far, none of his conces-In "rebel" territory, imme- sions has made much impression in the south. "First, we want our money back," said Mr Gorani, asked what would end the revolt. "Second, we want Sali Berisha to resign and to be put on trial. Third, we want Albanian state radio and television to start telling the truth. Four, we want the Shik to behave properly." It is a list that may spell the end for Sali Berisha.



Macedonia seethes with ethnic tension

Europe Editor

European Union governments are expressing increasing concern at ethnic ten-sions in Macedonia which they say have brought the former Yugoslav republic to "boiling point". The British, French and Greek ambassadors handed Branko Crvenkovski, the Macedonian Prime Minister, an EU statement last Tuesday that urged a peaceful end to a threeweek-old confrontation between Slav Macedonian students and members of the country's ethnic Albanian minority.

At the same time the Macedonian government has asked the United Nations to suspend plans to scale down its 1.100-

strong peace-keeping force in the country, ostensibly because of the turmoil in neighbouring Albania. The UN force, which contains 500 Americans, has helped preserve Macedonia's precarious stability since 1993, but it was due to be reduced by 300 troops by the end of April.

Both the Macedonian government's request and the EU statement underline the continuing tensions in Macedonia, where most people are Slavic-speakers but ethnic Albanians make up 23 per cent of the 2 million population. The latest disturbances began on 17 February in the capital. Skopje, and quickly spread to Tetovo, an ethnic Albanian stronghold in western Macedonia. According to Emrie Sadikoska, an eth-

nic Albanian student representative. Slav Macedonian university and high school students have chanted slogans such as "Gas chambers and death to the Albanians". Ethnic Albanians have responded with chants such as "Macedomians out of Tetovo".

Tetovo is a highly sensitive city because borders not only Albania but the mainly Albanian-populated Serbian province of Kosovo, itself seething with ethnic rivalries. About 80 per cent of Tetovo's 100,000 people are ethnic Albanians, and their efforts to operate an Albanian-language university have angered the Macedonians. Some Macedomans suspect the ethnic Albanians of harbouring ambitions of secession and

unification with Albania and Kosovo. The Albanians of western Macedonia declared themselves autonomous in 1992. Last autumn about 1,000 ethnic Al-

hanjan schoolchildren were struck down by a mysterious illness that caused headaches and breathing problems. Some ethnic Albanians accused Slav Macedonians of poisoning the children, but World Health Organisation experts said

the outbreak had psychological causes. Underlining the West's fears that unrest in Macedonia could spark a wider Balkan conflict, the EU statement said: "A stable and prosperous country is not only in the interest of the population of Macedonia, but also essential for the stability of the region as a whole.

Striking miners lift siege of Bonn

Imre Karacs

Peace returned to the streets of Bonn vesterday as striking miners lifted their tour-day siege and retreated 20 miles to the north. It was, however, merely a tactical withdrawal they claimed, as they pitched their tents in a Cologne stadium.

Hans Berger, the leader of the minets' union, vowed that 50,000, maybe 100,000" people would descend on the seat of government if today's talks failed to yield results. Mr Berger was to have seen Helmut Kohl on Tuesday, but the meeting was postponed by the Chancellor at short notice, as demonstrators camped outside his office.

With great reluctance, the miners heeded their leader's advice to leave Bonn, but not before branding Mr Berger a "Judas". Six thousand demonstrators from the Saarland had arrived on Tuesday night and early yesterday morning, re-placing the Ruhr contingency who decamped to Cologne.

Mr Berger's agreement to keep the miners away from Bonn appears to have extracted concessions from the gov-

At today's meeting, Mr Kohl is expected to propose a delay in the programme to cut back coal subsidies. Although the government still insists that annual support for the industry, which fast year amounted to 10bn German marks, should come down to DM5bn by 2005. the new plan foresees the closure of only one pit before 2000.

The revised package is also expected to include a more generous budget for retraining and job creation. Nevertheless, the end result is likely to remain the same. By 2005, an estimated 50,000 miners will have lost their jobs, leaving just 35,000 places in the surviving pits.

PNG's private army spurs Australia into action

Michael Ashworth Port Moresby

OT FASTER

Last month Alexander Downer, the Australian Foreign Minister, arrived in Papua New Guinea for an official visit. As members of the entourage stepped out of their Falcon jet into the hot, humid night air at Port Moresby. they saw the dark outline of the largest aircraft in the world, a Russian-made Antonov 124. Curiosity developed into confu-sion, swiftly followed by ourrage.

The presence of the Antonov meant that Sandline International, the military advisory company, and the company it subcontracts to Executive Outcomes, had also arrived in PNG. To Mr Downer's horror "the world's largest private army "had pitched up less than 100 miles from Australia - with equipment, personnel and an array of

sophisticated weaponry.
Its presence reflected a PNG
vote of no confidence in Australia's ability to assist in resolving the nine-year seces sionist conflict on the island of Bougainville by the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA) which has consistently out-manoeuvred government troops.

This was all the more galling for Australia, since it has enjoyed a close relationship with its former colony, including a \$12m (£7.5m) defence contribution military assistance and

a \$320m aid budget. What led Sir Julius Chan, the Prime Minister of PNG, to privatise the training of his armed forces was his belief that his Force, which made a habit of

closest ally and friend, Australia, was frustrating his government's attempts to deal with the in-surrection. "We ... have requested the Australians support us in providing the necessary specialist training and equipment ... They have consistently declined and therefore I had no choice but to go to the pri-vate sector." Sir Julius told The

His approach to the Bougainville problem in the early

Independent.



days of his administration was described by the Australians as "creative and courageous".

In 1994 he convinced the Australians to fund a short-term peace-keeping force drawn from South Pacific countries. He also initiated the Arawa Peace Conference in October that year, and in 1995 established the Bougainville Transitional Government. But all negotiations failed, due to a mixture of BRA intransigence and the ill-disci-pline of the PNG Defence

committing an atrocity just as a breakthrough was imminent. Sir Julius was well aware of the lack of control he had over his army. With no assistance forthcoming from the Australians, he looked elsewhere and found it at 535 Kings Road, London, the representative offices of Sandline International. Notwithstanding all the reports about "guns for hire", the main

> We don't like mercenaries ... any reasonable alternative to mercenaries is to be preferred?

task for Sandline and Executive

Outcomes will be to whip the

army into shape and to act as a "force multiplier" rather than as front-line troops.

Other, non-military, initiatives include buying back the Panguma mine on Bougainville, which is at the heart of the crisis, and directing funds towards economic redevelopment projects on the island.

The Papuans charge that the Australian approach to the problem lacks coherence. Canberra has been unequivocal in BRA, and it endorsed and con-

tributed to the PNG Defence White Paper in July 1996 which recommended "improving and modernising of existing capa-bilities in the PNGDF".

But Australia has repeatedly turned down requests for assistance in specialist training and procurement of sophisticated weaponry. Weapons and equipment were sold under the caveat that they were not to be armed and not to be used offensively in Bougainville. Australia also used its influence in the West to prevent other nations from supplying PNG with equip-ment. As well as being irritated by this paternal interference, the PNG government also felt that it smacked of hypocrisy.

The reasons for Canberra's reticence were simple. Despite training provided by the Aus-tralians, the PNGDF was not in good order. Offences and human rights violations committed on Bougainville acted as the best recruitment advertisement and propaganda weapon for the BRA. The Australians, wary of public opinion and of being associated with an army criticised by Amnesty International,

sought to distance itself.
"What developed was a
Catch 22 situation. The more the Australians distanced themselves, the worse it became. The worse it became, the more the Australians distanced themselves" says Sean Dorney, a correspondent with ABC who has lived in PNG for 11 years.

While the Australians accuse Sir Julius of employing mercenaries and of applying "a military solution" to a situation that will only backfire, Sir Julius continually reiterates his position that, whilst the national army remains a laughing stock there is little incentive for the rebels to enter into reasonable negotiation. He charges that Australia's "fence-sitting" has hamstrung the Defence Force and allowed a minority of extremists with no international justification to gain control of an area and impose their will on a terrorised people.

There are signs, however. that after the initial violent war of words over the affair, Australia and Papua New Guinea are coming closer. John Howard. the Australian Prime Minister. and Sir Julius held talks on Sunday in Sydney. Following the meeting, there were indications that Australia might increase its training of PNG soldiers. Mr Howard said: "We don't like mercenaries. We think any reasonable alternative to mercenaries is to be preferred."

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Forging links behind the Iron Curtain

Nato's plans to expand into cen-tal Europe have raised the backles of Russia, and brought citicism from foreign policy guris across Europe and America. But the man who laid the foundations for Britain's Cold War policy towards Russia thinks that enlargement is right, whether or not Moscow agrees.

Frank Roberts - now Sir Frank, and 89 – left London in autumn 1944 to take up his post as the minister in the British embasy opposite the Kremlin. He vas at the Yalta conference between Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin at the beginning of February 1945, and arrived in Moscow in mid-March.

There he struck up a close friendship with George Kennan, his opposite number from the United States, and the intellectual grandfather of US national security doctrine. Mr Kennan recently said Nato enlargement would be the great-



Sir Frank Roberts: Nato enlargement is right

4 Stalin was the most villainous man alive, but very astute. Not figure?

est post-war error of US foreign policy, but Sir Frank disagrees. He believes Nato could provide stability in eastern Europe, just as it produced stability in Westrn Europe 50 years ago. He describes the early days

n Moscow with Mr Kennan: We were doing the same jobs. was number two to Archie Tark Kerr British Ambasador] - he was number two to verell Harriman. We got on stremely well. Our policies bwards the Soviet Union were not very different." Indeed, he sys, Someone might have aked why we had two embassies. If we'd been in a meetig with Stalin, we shared it with tle Americans and vice versa. were constantly in touch. Sir Frank met Stalin many tihes. "He was the most vilanous man alive but a very astue one. He murdered even re people than Hitler."

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gent Sanditt.



country can the the development of democratic institutions in

Russia ... And make it clear that

we want a different but not un-

friendly relationship with Russia."

ocal. "Russia can't be a mem-ber of Nato. it's too big. The Russian thing will have to be de-veloped on its own - as one

great power with a special re-lationship with Nato."

So is Nato right to enlarge? The Russians will never like a country like Poland going into

Nato. I think it will result in

greater stability in eastern Eu-

rope - but I couldn't expect to

convince the Russians of that eas-

ily. I believe Nato has shown ex-

traordinary resilience in

modifying its position. It has to

remain an effective military force

but at the same time it has to take

this great opportunity to provide stability in Eastern Europe, just

as it produced stability in West-

em Europe 50 years ago."

But on Nato. he is unequiv-

of our series, Christopher **Bellamy** meets a

former key player in Moscow Did Sir Frank know that at

the time? "Of course ... But he wasn't a very dictatorial figure. Not like Hitler or Mussolini ... He was very softly spoken. So when Churchill and Roosevelt met him they were very pleas-antly surprised." Sir Frank wrote three masterly

letters to Ernest Bevin, then foreign secretary, setting out the prospects for co-operation with Russia, Russian aims and attitudes. "George Kennan sent a big think-piece to Washington on the prospects of continuing what we still called the 'Roosevelt pol-icy' of getting on with the Russians. The Foreign Office then asked me to do a similar exercise from the British point of view - there being a slight difference between the British and American positions." And what was that differ-

ence? "We had an empire. We were an imperial power. So we were more vulnerable to what Khrushchev later called "national liberation movements". The Cold War as such really came after the Berlin blockade. Before that we were just forecasting, as it were."

"The message really was we [Britain and the US] must be more realistic - if we are we can get on with them."

Did policy towards Russia move in a different direction from that advocated by the avery dictatorial diplomats in Moscow, I asked "It certainly did for Kennan in the US. The Roosevelt idea was, we must somehow get on. .We, of course, had a very realistic foreign secretary in Ernie Bevin ... Of course, I was preaching to a slightly converted audience in the shape of Ernie Bevin - a great trade union leader ... Kennan's efforts

were less successful in the US." Sir Frank said that Truman "became a complete convert" to the "realistic" approach, but over time the Americans changed. "Containment became hostility. That was never his [Kennan's] intention."

Our conversation shifted to the present. Did Sir Frank think Western policy towards Russia was the right one?

"I think we have to always re-member, whatever it is, the geographically diminished Russia is still a potential great power and in some respects an actual one. The danger with Russia is that

World plans: From left, Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin at the Yalta conference in the Crimea in February 1945

Stolen kangaroos hop back to circus

Warsaw (Reuters) — Two boxing kangaroos which vanished from a travelling circus in the central Poland town of Nowy Dwor have been found and returned in good shape, police

said vesterday. Witold Gieralt, a police spokesman, said that the kangaroos were found late on Tuesday, the same day they went

Stanislaw Zalewski, the circus director, suspected that the kangaroos had been deliberately released from their cage.

Undoubtedly they were stolen ... I don't think it could be any of the [circus] employces. It was a hooligan or some-one with a peculiar sense of humour," he said. While the male kangaroos

Gin and Tonic were at large, police warned the public not to approach them because they were experts with their fists.

In fact, both came quietly when caught and their Russian trainer, identified only as Lena. denied they were vicious. "They're as gentle as children, as rabbits," she told Recer-| pospolita daily.

people either exaggerate its strengths or exaggerate its weak-nesses. I think we are right to encourage as far as an outside Customs fraud costs EU dear

Strastburg Europe is losing billions of pound in customs and tax revenue a international criminals

benefitirom abolition of border control and lax revenue policing, the European Parliament was toll yesterday. Europe's spreading "grey"

economy is feeding a new criminal undirworld, creating a dangerous alture of dependency and detriving the union of much-neded revenue. The inquiry in the failure of the EU transit syttem and transit fraud, chaired by John Tomlinson, a Labour KEP, will undermine confidence in the creation of a horder-frie Europe.

Criminals based in East Europe are exploiting lax policing of customs and tax systems be-cause member-states have failed to compensate for abolition of border controls by updating crime-fighting systems and sharing information. Four years after the abbittion of border controls, member-states continue 10 act at 15 separate emities, providings free-for-all

for the criminals.

The report calls for a common customs investigation body and a centralised cistoms intelligence office to fisht fraud, and computerisation of the entire transit system.

Cigarettes are the biggest siness for customs fraudsters, the report says. "A cona potential fiscal value of about 1m ecu [£700.000]. Almost all of this is potential profit for the smuggler." The report focuses on the "community transit system", by which goods from out-side the EU move through member-states.

The tax system set up for such goods involves 18 million operations a year, all by paper and open to fraudsters. Goods such as cigarettes or alcohol are simply unloaded clandestinely en route and placed on the black

Nobody knows the extent of the fraud, says the report. Estimates vary by billions from country to country. The fraud poses a big threat to the livelihoods of those working for companies operating in the "legrimate economy", putting jobs

at risk, says the report.

"More insidious is the malign influence of the 'grey' economy. which is fed by transit fraud and customs fraud in general. This parallel economy thrives at the expense of the legitimate economy, leading to unemployment and slower growth." The inquiry team heard of evidence of a link between the sluggishness of the "official economy" and expansion of the "grey" economy. Now your money is

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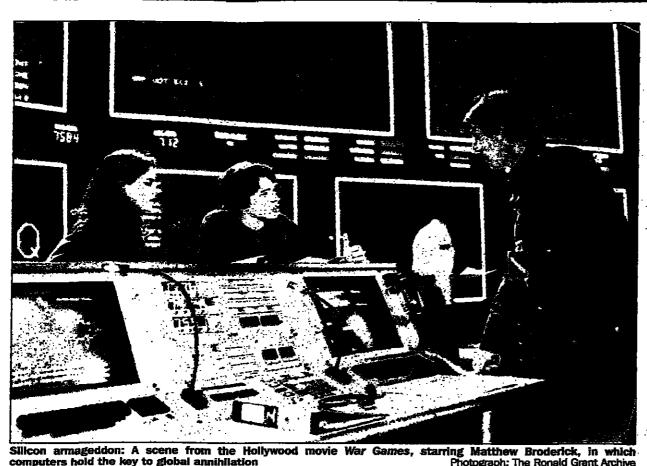
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Britain's defences down against cyber-warriors

Britain has left itself open to an electronic attack on the computer systems which now control every aspect of our lives, a written answer to the House of Lords revealed on Monday.

In contrast, the United States has recognised the problem of "Information warfare" (IW). A report to the US government obned by The Independent has recommended the creation of a national "focal point" to coordinate information-warfare defence, which it estimates will cost \$3.1bn (£1.9bn) over the next

Lord Kennet asked the British Government whether it disagreed with the conclusions of the US report. Earl Howe replied that the Ministry of Defence and the Department of Trade and Industry were each looking at the problem, but

co-ordination between them.
"Within the Ministry of Defence, systems are designed with features to reduce the possibility of a successful attack," he said. "It would not be appropriate to comment on the details of these security features, nor on the resources expended in developing such designs". However, the US report

recognises that it is not just military computer systems, but the entire information structure of the state which could be at-tacked. It says the US could face a "national security disaster" because it is too dependent on computers which are increasingly vulnerable to a paralysing information warfare attack.

In an internal letter dated 21 November, the chairman of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Information Warfare, Duane P Andrews, said there is a need for "extraordinary ac-tion" to reduce the Defense Deparalyse or confuse its computer systems; for a new focal point for all information warfare activity; and that the Pentagon had ignored two previous studies which had made similar recommendations.

The report, entitled "Information Warfare - Defense" says: there is a need for extraordinary

6 A study found that US Central Command could be paralysed by an information warfare attack on one building?

action to deal with the present and emerging challenges of de-fending against possible infor-mation-warfare attacks on facilities, information systems, and networks of the United States which would seriously affect the ability of the Department

of Defense to carry out its assigned missions and functions. The report highlights more than 50 measures needed "to better prepare the Department for this new form of warfare". This, it says, would begin with identification of an accountable focal point within the Departend with "the allocation or reallocation of approximately \$3 billion over the next five years".

For some years, strategists have recognised that modern, information-based societies are becoming ever more dependent on computers which now control all aspects of finance and the economy, all transport systems, telecommunications, the media and broadcasting, and power supplies, to name the

pointed out that Savanrah, Georgia, the port through which the US Central Command would deploy to a var zone elsewhere in the world, could be paralysed by an information warfare attack on just one building, which contains he computers controlling the traffic system, communications and

electric power system. The report points out that all current US military doctrineas-sumes information superiority.

The reality is that the rulnerability of the Department of Defense - and of the nation -to offensive information warfare attack is largely a self-created

"Program by program economic sector by economic sector, we have based critical functions on inadequately-protected telecomputing services. In aggregate, we have created a target-rich environment and the US industry has sold glob-ally much of the generic technology that can be used to strike these targets."

Although war has ilways been based on deception as Sun Tzu wrote in the 4th century BC, modern dependence on computers multiplies the opportunity to mislead and to deceive, as well as to merely frustrate decision makers.

The report uses graphics to explain how information warfare is fundamentally different from traditional warfare. The technology is simple, adversaries can remain anonymous the law is uncertain and it is also nncertain whether an informiment for all IW activities", and tion attack is an act of crime or of war. It is estimated that an opponent might use tactical information warfare against US forces in the field by 2005.

The Russians have devoted great attention to information warfare - especially attack with and defence against computer viruses - since about 1991.

The present Defence Mins ter, Igor Rodionov, had psponsibility for an information warfare research cell when he commanded the General Saff Another US study recently Academy.

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significant shorts

Russian reshuffle brings in liberal reformers

The Russian Prime Minister, Viktor Chernomyrdin, said he was forming a new government of liberal reformers in a reshuffle the Communist opposition branded "ruinous" for Russia.

President Boris Yeltsin has given Mr Chernomyrdin one week to reorganise his cabinet. "Professional market economists, firm supporters of the President's course of reforms, will come into the government," the Itar-Tass news agency quoted the Prime Minister as saying.

The lower house of parliament, dominated by Mr Yeltsin's communist opponents, demanded a reversal of the changes. "They are an eloquent testimony to the readiness of the leadership to subject Russia and her vital interests to the diktat of the International Monetary Fund [IMF] and foreign capital." Reuters - Moscov

Zaire targets US envoy

Zairean protesters burned the American flag and demanded the expulsion of the US Ambassador, Daniel Simpson, and his staff, while the Zairean prime minister blamed everyone but France for ignoring what he called the tragedy in eastern Zaire.

Chanting: "That's enough, Clinton!" and "Americans, get out!" about 200 people demonstrated at the US embassy. Zairean soldiers moved in to break up the demonstration when the flag was burned. AP - Kinshasa

New flights to China

Air China is to open a new route linking Peking, London and Hong Kong to mark the British colony's return to Chinese rule on 1 July, the China Daily said. AP - Peling

\$25,000 jeans come home

Levi Strauss & Co has paid \$25,000 (£15,500) for a pair of its vintage jeans, according to the New York Times. The report said the pair was believed to be one of he two oldest in existence, which had spent time in an inactive coal mine in Colorado and in a vintage clothing store in New York's SoHo district. A leather patch on the waistband said the jeans date from 1886 to 1902, when they would have sold for about \$1.25. Reuters - New York

Prostitute sues for sex fees

A Stockholm man allegedly telephoned a prostitute arranged to meet her, specified what sexual service he wanted, and then didn't show up, newspapers reported.

But the prostitute wanted payment and sent him a bill for 1,500 kronor (£125). When he didn't pay, she fled suit. One court refused the case, but the woman arpealed to a higher court, which ordered that the lower court hear the case next month.

Special branch disbanded

Australia's last surviving police special branch was disbanded following allegations of improper activity at a police corruption inquiry.

The New South Wales state police commissioner said

more than 20 officers up to the rank of superintendent would be relocated and an inquiry held into the squad's

Marriage proves instant drag

An Indonesian teenager splashed out on Javish wedding only to find when he got home that his bride was a he, not a she.

A Muslim cleric formalised the wedding at Samarinda in East Kalimantan province. But the bride of the 18-year-old groom, the Jakarta Post said was in fact a 38year-old transvestite drag queen who ran a local beauty

Vouchers are a good idea on paper, but...

whispered in think-tank seminars, an idea of daring radicalism. Vouchers for parents of schoolchildren, vouchers for students - at the Adam Smith Institute they talked of little else. Labour's snarling response helped to pump up the idea, made it a kind of policy fetish. An interesting theory became an article of faith. An idea worth a spin, needing to be elaborated, worth a trial under controlled conditions, became a touchstone of partisan identity. Tory ideology explains why the voucher exper-

iment in nursery provision is failing.
Vouchers are, in principle, a way of mobilising competition. Competition is, in principle, a necessary ingredient in public service provision. Thanks to the Thatcherite enthusiasm for driving down the costs of the public sector - an achievement for which Tony Blair rightly credits her - the idea of tendering contracts for the provision of social, health and educational services has become commonplace. Provided contracts can be specified, monitored and re-tendered after a due period, they can be a way of securing public services at less cost than a producer-dominated oldstyle public authority. Neither local authorities nor health trusts should lack the weapon of contracting out. Vouchers are a way of getting consumers to challenge public providers. Rather than

Then the Tories took office 17 years ago vouchers were a secret code. The word was exact in think took account was a ticket allows them to choose and keep providers on their toes. Vouchers are an opportunity, but likely to work only where a range of providers (schools, universities) already exists.

The problem with nursery vouchers as not the theory, it was the terrain. In parts of the country, schooling effectively begins at four-plus; elsewhere there is a rich mixture of play school, private nurseries, reception classes; in others provision is still sketchy. Mrs Thatcher herself, in an earlier incarnation as a caring education minister anxious to dispel her milk-snatcher tag, had promised to expand nursery provision. Since then, the Tories have had a fit of family fright. It is now very unclear whether as a party they actually want women to leave home to work; if they do, it is not clear whether they believe there ought to be a public responsibility to ensure children are given that peculiar mix of education. entertainment and care which characterises the best pre-school provision.

Confusion notwithstanding, the Major government determined to go ahead with vouchers. But it made two critical errors. One, it assumed the prospect of getting money from parents would encourage voluntary sector and private companies to invest capital in buildings. It also made an error of judgement in neglecting the conse-



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quences for pre-schoolers of its own policy of encouraging local management of schools and parental choice of primary schools. Desirable primaries would inevitably seek to maximise their income and their enrolments by themselves expanding into pre-school provision, even if it meant (as it has) attaching hammocks to the rafters and tents in the playground to accommodate the four-year-olds.

Predictions aside, the Government was at first prepared to do something which British social policy has fatally lacked - local experimentation. The refusal of Labour-controlled councils

to take part in this was deplorable, but inadvertently they set up a fascinating case study; if vouchers were not going to work in the favourable Tory surroundings of Kensington and Wandsworth, they were not going anywhere. Well, they haven't worked. But, in spite of negative evidence, in spite of the fact that the experiments had not run their course, a dogmatic government ruled that vouchers were to be extended nationally.

Now the Tories on the House of Commons Education Committee have let light dawn: vouchers may even be forcing private schools out of business.

So far from increasing the number of places, the viability of some schools is being threatened, and the total number of available places may be drop-ping. In a world in which public policy was conducted with some semblance of rationality, the pilot schemes would have been carried to their conclusion. the evidence coolly evaluated and efforts made to repair the gaps. Instead. the evidence has been ignored. The failure of nursery vouchers does

not mean that "market principles" cannot or should not be applied in the public sector. It does not stamp vouchers with the mark of Cain. It does, however. give two pointers which Stephen Dorrell should pick up before he gives any further thought to his (suspiciously sketchy) plans for the future of social services. One is about basic supply. In ageing Britain, residential care for the elderly will need to grow - vouchers may be an ineffective way of securing adequate provision. There is a conceptual confusion here, too. Mr Dorrell's sensible insistence that most care is now and will continue to be provided by family and out of people's own resources implies that public resources ought to be targeted on those who are in need. But the prospect of such support ought not to be a disincentive to personal savings for old age. In such circumstances, vouchers do not seem to fit at all vouchers are best conceived as a way of distributing funds universally.

The other pointer is to the emerging role of a public sector which itself provides fewer and fewer services directly. The gap in the nursery formula which is in danger of being repeated in the Government's thinking about social services is the importance of the tasks of inspection, monitoring and regulation. Deregulation is yesterday's cry. In the new "mixed economy" of social policy the role of the state as the enforcer and guarantor of standards needs, if anything, to grow.

Alarm calls in the chamber

Tt's time for the Speaker to arrive in Lithe Nineties. She has ruled that MPs cannot use bleeper messages sent by researchers to facilitate clever questions during parliamentary debates. How absurd. If those peachy keen advisers had sent their remarks in on old-fashioned note-paper. Betty Boothroyd would not have batted an eye-lid.

She made one wise concession. MPs can receive messages on pagers in the chamber so long as they are switched to vibrate and not to bleep. So next time a snoring backbencher fizzes to life, we will know what is shuddering in his pocket. The Speaker is not the only one to need waking up now and again.

• LETTERS TO THE EDITOR •

Cloning: the 'experts' must learn to listen

Sir: I recently had the privilege of taking part in a television debate on cloning which included, amongst others, Richard Dawkins ("Dolly and the cloth-heads", 8

I was invited because I have been working closely with the ethical

Imagine my surprise to read in The Independent a piece of invective by Professor Dawkins. very obviously referring to our TV spokespeople should be excluded from having a public voice on

shuffle bring

aformers :

₹15 ENO

y Chana

was metals out

I was for some years a nuclear inspector, assessing the risk that a Three Mile Island-type accident might happen at Sizewell. But the gulf between what we as "experts" calculated the risk to be and how the public perceived it was enormous. The industry found out the hard way that saying "I am the expert and I will tell how silly you are" was a public-relations disaster, and yet here the Professor of the Public Understanding of Science is

First listen to your public.

facts wrong. The point at issue was never whether clones would lack individuality, but that in ethics there is a world of difference between a deliberate act of cloning an existing human being and the unpredictable occurrence of twins.

Three of us made this point to

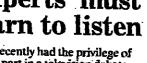
Director of the Society, Religion and Technology Project Church of Scotland

Sir: I know exactly what Professor Dawkins is complaining about in his article, for I have no doubt which radio discussion programme provoked it just two days before his

Service discussion between myself. the professor and a distinguished rabbi, the latter slightly overstated his case about individuality being compromised by genetic identity between clones. Professor Dawkins was on to him like a shot, using the example of identical twins to show that clones already occurred naturally, and with consummate cross-examining skill drove him

Clearly the rabbi did understand the science correctly, and could have made the perfectly sound point (which he made to me immediately afterwards) that while identical twins did indeed occur in nature, it would be ethically questionable to create them

deliberately. For the record, Professor Dawkins did agree with me that if there were going to be laws on



March: letters, 11 March).

aspects, as convenor of a working group of specialists in Edinburgh on the ethics of genetic engineering, including Dolly's "discoverer", lan Wilmut.

debate. His thesis was that religious matters where only experts belong. But who is the "expert" who alone is qualified to speak in the public arena?

doing just that.

Science has no future if it does not, because the public will rightly cease to own it. We need more nonexpert participation on these ssues, not less.

Sadly, Professor Dawkins got his

him, but he evidently missed it. But then he is an expert in neither religion nor ethics, and it was a BBC Religious Affairs programme about ethics. One might well ask with equal weight what he was doing there. Dr DONALD M BRUCE

Orpington, article appeared. In a three-sided BBC World

further out on to the limb which he had tentatively ventured on to-

Sir: I always enjoy reading Professor Dawkins's articles.

human cloning there had to be some public debate about what those laws should contain, and in a democratic society it was absurd to suggest that religious people should not be allowed to take part in such debates (or not take part as

vigorously as they could in order to

win the argument).
Thus was he forced to retract his earlier allegation that religious people were trying to "tell the rest of us how to behave". I suppose I could have written a supercilious article for you about how scientists like him do not understand the democratic process, citing something I had heard one of them say recently in a radio studio. CLIFFORD LONGLEY

Sir: I believe Richard Dawkins has always supported the need to explore rationally the deep ethical concerns about the possible uses of scientific discoveries; there are plenty of philosophers of science and professors of medical ethics

competent to do this.

No "overstretched" and poorly informed person - religious leader or otherwise - need write or broadcast their comments. whatever the blandishments of the media (letter, 11 March). Any such overstretched scientist asked to comment on "the implications of Popper's objective knowledge", or anything else, would reply: "Search me, mate - not my field. But contact X or Y, they're bang up to speed on these issues." ANN DUNCOMBE Menstrie, Central Scotland

mainly to find the pH of his current

invective - recently about 2.1 on my | and Gynaecologists has suggested Universal Indicator.

Could I remind the learned Professor of the Public Understanding of Science what a much greater scientist wrote in 1615: "I think that in discussions of physical problems we ought to begin not from the authority of scriptural passages, but from senseexperiences and necessary demonstrations; for the holy Bible and the phenomena of nature proceed alike from the divine Word, the former as the dictate of the Holy Ghost and the latter as the observant executrix of God's

commands." Was Galileo such a cloth-head? DI HW JONES Nantwich, Cheshire

Allow women in labour to choose

Sir. In the emotionally charged debate about Caesarean sections, I am alarmed to see that Professor Homer states that the treatment of choice for breech presentation is Caesarean section (letter, 10 March)

Routine Caesarean section for the term breech foetus is not justified by the available data. It is one of several treatment interventions available, the others including selected vaginal breech delivery or external cephalic version at term.

The effectiveness of this latter procedure is demonstrated by clear evidence from controlled trials, and the Royal College of Obstetricians | University of Huddersfield

that units audit their success in achieving the standard that "all women at term with an uncomplicated pregnancy in

breech presentation should be offered external cephalic version". We have a duty to provide our patients with reliable accurate information about options available to them, so they can make a fully informed choice. MIKÉ DIVERS Consultant Obstetrician and Gynaecologist Douglas, Isle of Man

Sir. One would have more sympathy with the Court of Appeal in the Caesarean section case, and with the views of the learned chairman of the BMA's medical ethics committee (letter, 10 March), if English law embodied a presumption in favour of the unborn child. But the common law has never done so, and foetuses in the waste bags at hospitals and clinics graphically demonstrate that neither does statute.

If the woman concerned had earlier wanted to terminate the pregnancy she could, with medical agreement, have done so. But as she preferred to leave the viability of the foctus to nature (or, as some would say, to the will of God) she was prevented from so doing, by an unholy combination of judges and medics. Without a presumption of law in their favour, by what right do they impose their own judgements on the bodies of pregnant women? NIC COLDAN

Sir: Robert Forman is right to suggest that women should be able to exercise their choice in pregnancy care and support but wrong in his claim that it is not available via medical insurance

(letter, 7 March). PPP Healthcare does make provision for normal pregnancy in some of its private health care plans. Depending on the product selected, a woman can claim for all eligible untenatal and postnatal consultations, ultrasound scans and any diagnostic tests the consultant requests after an initial qualifying JONATHAN RUSSELL Group Director of Public Relations

PPP Healtheare Group London WC1

Vary energy tax Sir: In view of Michael Meacher's evidently strong support for a sustainable energy policy (letter, 10

March), I hope he will vigorously oppose the Labour Party's current policy of reducing value-added tax on energy.

There is an evident need to

increase the cost of energy to consumers, so as to encourage ncreasing efficiency of use, and reduce demand. At the same time, it is essential not to increase the financial burden on those least able to pay, who are often stuck with poorly constructed, energyinefficient housing.

There appears to be a straightforward way to achieve both aims. This is to set an initial

Moon 'fakers'

missed a trick

Sir: If the pictures of the first lunar landing are indeed wholly or partly faked (Letters, 7 March), then one small question arises. How come no one bothered to take any pictures of Neil Armstrong?
It has been a cause of irritation

in the British Interplanetary Society and other like-minded bodies that no photographs exist of the first man on the Moon. He took plenty of shots of Buzz Aldrin, but by a strange oversight it appears that Aldrin never took any of him. Our only pictorial record of Armstrong on the lunar surface is a small and distorted reflection on the face-plate of Aldrin's helmet.

It is the sort of thing that happens sometimes in real-life situations; but don't try to convince MICHAEL STONE Peterhorough

Banks

consumption amount per year which would be taxed at a low rate

domestic customer account. All

energy consumed above this amount would be taxed at a higher rate (say, the standard rate of 17.5

Millennial myth

Sir: M C Patrick (Letters, 7 March)

states that "under the Computer Millennium Problem up to 91) per

cent of computers will be unable to

move ... to I January 2000, and will

This is an urban myth. Virtually

all computer systems are perfectly

capable of dealing with dates in the next century: the problem is only

with certain quite old (mainly pre-Eighties) software, most of which

Those making most noise are the contractors who are offering to fix

will be fixed well before 2000.

these software problems, and

Motorway speed

Sir: Motorists' failure to observe

blamed for motorway pile-ups in

Basra", 11 March). Drivers would

probably take more notice of the

signs if there were not so often a

failure to revise or cancel the

advised limit as soon as driving

conditions change. All too often

the warning lights are found to be

fog ("It looks like the road to

advisory speed limits is often

certain elements of the mass

BEN HUTCHINGS

media.

Oxford

of VAT (say, zero), for each

per cent).

Aberdeen

CH OSMAN

hecome useless".

Sir: Your Science Editor, Charles Arthur, states ("Comet sets blazing trail", 11 March) that the Moon is 93 million miles from Earth. Presumably he means the Sun. which is indeed approximately 93 million miles away (the Moon is about a quarter of a million miles

from us).
Also, Mr Arthur states that Comet Hale-Bopp is 400km wide: by all other accounts it is just 40km

wide. What's a decimal point between friends? Well, if Hale-Bopp was really 400km wide, and was not further away than the distance of the Moon. I for one would be digging a hole right now. BOB GRAINGER Comet Quest

Liverpool needs to face reality

Sir: As long as journalists allow Liverpudlians to enjoy and promote their cosy self-image of brave loser and victim, nothing in this city will ever change, nor will anyone want it to ("Hidden virtues of loser-friendly Liverpool", 11 March).

Yes, community is here, but parochial and rigidly defined by class, religion and background, and heaven help anyone who is neither Catholic nor working class.

Liverpudlians can choose to stay in their early-20th-century persona or come into the nearly-21st century and face the harsh realities of modern life. They should not expect to do both, nor should they be encouraged in this by outsiders. **EVELYN ROSS** Liverpool

Pesky mink

Sir. R Burfoot writes about the ethics of mink farming (letter, 10 March). Does he know of anyone who will actually "open the cage and see it bolt for the freedom of fresh air"?

If he does, he is perhaps ethically obliged to point out to them that the mink is an enthusiastic carnivore. What it is bolting for is more likely to be a meal off our native small animals and birds, or their young, than fresh air.

Whether or not it should be farmed for fur, the mink is not a nice animal or a friend to others. We do not want it in our countryside. PHILLIP O'DONOGHUE New Barnet, Hernfordshire

Fax: 0171-293 2056; e-mail: letters@independent.co.uk). E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

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London E18

crying wolf.
FRANCIS ROADS

Time to put your head on the block, Mr Hogg

eople these days don't have much sense of history, but It is part of a necessary it is surprising how many of them have constitutional at least heard of Crichel Down. Like Speenhamland or Tolpudfiction for the dle, it is a place which has given its name to a moment in history. It is supposed to mark minister to one of the few occasions when a government minister voluntake the blame teered to walk the plank in recognition that he is responsi-- even when ble for the actions of his civil servants. Sir Thomas Dugdale the fault lies in in 1954 resigned as Minister of Agriculture after a hue and cry Whitehall, says about his ministry's underhand activity as it hung on to some Dorset farmland nationalised Richard D before the Second World War. Crichel Down vented peo-North ple's anger that the Men from

the Ministry still relished the power they wielded during or lack of actions in the past. wartime exigencies. Similarly, However, prime ministers genthe meat hygiene issues vent erally have more appetite for contemporary feelings of ministers hanging on to office unease about Animal Farm. Lurking behind that is the William Plowden, a close larger unease that the urge to observer of government, con-

innovate in agriculture is breakfirms that even Sir Thomas Presumably, as John Major wrestles with the BSE and E revisionist view of Dugdale is that he was much more coli brouhahas, he must be involved in the decisions which wondering what precedent were found to be untenable might direct him to do. Crichel Down should resonate as part than had been supposed. It of the weird blend of pragmawasn't a case of him just falling tism and principle that makes on his sword because of his offiup the British constitution. cials' actions." Ministers are For all we know. Douglas most likely to go, as Sir Thomas have real power, it will open up Hogg is itching to accept the did, when their own party the vast new difficulty of how to

ment. Fostering a myth of dis-interested nobility then became convenient all round. The abiding but perverse impression was that one could despise the Men from the Ministry, but revere good old Tom.

It does not do to be too cynical. Professor Peter Hennessy, Whitehall's biographer, stresses that the "folkloric" view of another famous resignation is well-found. One of Dugdale's junior ministers was the young Peter (now Lord) Carrington, who tendered his resignation along with his boss. The Prime Minister, Winston Churchill would not accept it. In 1982. Lord Carrington again tendered his resignation. According to Hennessy: "He was the spe-cialist adviser on the Falklands, and he got it wrong. He was car-rying the can for his officials." The principle of ministerial

responsibility is crucial to the understanding that democratic control of some part of the executive really does work. We see where the real power lies. But it also marks a quid pro quo. As servants of the Crown was not what it seemed: "The behest of a particular minister. and in exchange for being ciphers, officials must be given a large degree of protection and anonymity. The less ministers accept responsibility, the more the public will seek it among officials. If that leads to an understanding that officials blame for his ministry's actions decides they are an embarrass- make them accountable for it.

Reading Hennessy, or the inspiration for his work, Anthony Sampson's Anatomy of Britain, one gathers that the more a minister knows about what his civil servants have been up to, or has directed it, the more their actions are his responsibileven when the minister knows nothing, or wasn't even around.

According to Plowden: "Successive ministers of agriculture seem to have presided over a shambles. Whoever happens to be sitting on the chair when the music stops ought to resign. So there is a case that Douglas Hogg ought to resign. He may say 'it wasn't me', but that's not how the system works". It amounts to a regimen in which a ministry (in the sense of continuous administration of the country by a particular prime minister or party) has collective responsibility.

Much of this is a necessary

fiction. Successive ministers in a department do not agree with each other's policies any more than cabinet contemporaries agree about everything. Ministers do not actually control their departments, any more than they understand the specialist or scientific advice on which they act. Their culpability for most of what they do is mination. Mr Hogg's most likely to be feeble. But their recent troubles flow from what

have the trappings of power as the democratic system (and whether they otherwise deserve them or not), and sometimes they will have to resign to show that they remain sensitive to the our of their position whether they deserve to or not.

Tinisters will often be hounded by people who know little and care less about the real difficulties of government. Much of the witch-hunt about the meat industry is misguided. The presence of BSE in cattle was something no one predicted. Once contamination had happened, the Government sought, pub-lished and mostly implemented good scientific advice on future regulation. It still looks likely that most people eating most beef have had no exposure to BSE and their exposure has lessened because of govern-

ment intervention. But it also looks at least possible, and even likely, that some people have already died, and that perhaps many more peo-ple will die from eating beef, and that sloppy habits in slaughterhouses have risked the continuance of the conta-

inadequate ministerial control dangerous infection in slaughterhouses, which links BSE and E coli, would nerhans warrant a resignation on its own.

A contributory reason why by reassuring the public that ministerial responsibility is real can we avoid the formation of a new bureaucracy and thus a lessening of ministerial responsibility. The opposition parties and the media are now baying for an independent agency to run food safety. Agencies are fine. They can advise ministers and administer ministerial authority, and if they are well led can punch beyond their weight. But in the degree to which they are independent they also risk being both weak and unaccountable. The fashion for them risks promising far more than they can deliver.

Even so, Mr Major presumably found himself embarrassed on Tuesday when he told the Commons, what is true, that a new food safety agency would make accountability more diffi-cult. After all, we have sharp memories of Michael Howard's refusal to take responsibility for the prisons agency. True, successive home secretaries have refused to abandon office just

jail. The point, though, is that Mr Howard needed to be supersensitive to the public's need to see accountability at work pre-

risks diluting accountability. Where regulatory agencies National Rivers Authority, their leadership fosters an open, feisty culture in which officials are encouraged in the ancient civil service role of "speaking truth to power". But we do not necessarily need new agencies to achieve this effect. This Government has stressed that it understands that scientific and technical civil servants must be free to speak their minds, and that their advice will increasingly be published. Technical advice is, after all, intended to be cool and unpolitical; it deserves to be seen as quite distinct from the politically-driven policy derived from it. If that culture is seriously encouraged, then we might do very well without new agencies. Either way, we would still need to protect officials from the wrath of the public. After all, we know they will go on mak-

ing mistakes. Some of the difficulties the

when its work involves a farm product, such as beef, and where the European Union has so much power over our fortunes. But this last works both ways: the EU also wanted to protect the reputation of British beef for too long, because British beef and EU beef had become coterminous. The EU had to jug-gle competing interests in health and economics, just as the UK government had to.

Derhaps it would be attrac-tive to separate accountability for food safety from that for farmers' well-being. But the merits of this approach can be overstated collective responsibility binds all ministers to a single policy and to mutual sup-port. Successive ministers in charge of both agriculture and health have lined up to sing from the same song-sheet. Stephen Dorrell, at Health, said beef was "safe by any normal use of the word". John Gummer, at Maff, publicly fed a beefburger to his daughter.

Dorrell and Gummer were, respectively, dangerously casuist and dangerously vulgar. What they said was more or less true ("by any normal use"), if said by an opinionated journalist or someone in a pub. But government ministers should have stuck with repeating what the scientists had said, which was, in effect: "We think beet is safe, but if we're wrong it's serious." It turned out that at least some bits of beef were

very dangerous indeed. Conservatives above all should abhor anything like nannying. Professor Hennessy stresses that the government minimalists of the 19th century believed that the two core functions of the state were public health and security. The first of these preoccupations has backfired: it has turned government into a reassurance industry.

So Douglas Hogg ought to resign because he is in the wrong place at the wrong time; because he has close responsibility for slaughterhouse practices which have gone wrong: because by resigning he can demonstrate that his ministry wants to stay in the food safety stays there will be further pressure for new bureaucracies

which may achieve nothing. But above all he ought to go because the Government has not sufficiently understood that while its main business is to banish risk from our lives, it has an even greater responsibility not to mislead us about those risks it cannot banish. Ministers had the task of trying to keep meat clean. They made a poorish job of doing this. But their behaviour becomes a resignation matter when we see that, when meat became more rather than less tisky to eat, ministers from various departments went on stressing that it was safe, and did so in terms which suggested nothing had changed with the arrival of BSE. In this, they have been wrong

all along. Events have conspired to throw their words and actions into high relief. There's a lot of noise about, but Ministry of Agriculture faced we can still detect that the flow from a need to protect music has stopped - and we all farmers. This is especially true know who's in the chair.



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Better intentions for some good inventions

science programme such as Start the Week with Melvyn Bragg, you might get the impression that the only scientific advances this century are in the field of genetics, ontology and anthropology, and that the only things worth talking about are how it all begin, where it's all going and what kind of DNA Jonathan Miller

has got. But scientific advance sometimes takes place on a much smaller scale than that, and is produced not by scientific genius but by accident. A lot of the breakthroughs that have benefited people most are never going to win a Nobel prize - indeed, some of the best advances were designed for something else entirely. When overhead telephone lines were invented, it was little dreamt that they would make a wonderful gathering place for birds. When the first railway lines were built, it was little dreamt that they would be turned by the Tories into a nationwide network of

overgrown paths. Today I am going to single out a few of the greatest

advances made this century, none of which was dreamt of by its inventor.

L Car wing mirrors

These were originally designed so that the driver could see behind him on either side, and can still so be used, but their vital purpose turns out to be to stop cars driving too close to each other. If you passed another car too close in the old days, you would have hit him. Nowadays you just hit his wing mirror with your wing mirror, both swing back and then return to their positions and no harm is done. Bicyclists have joined this trend recently, sprouting wide wing mirrors to keep cars away, though sometimes sporting long flagpoles pointing sideways, which seem to have the same effect. 2. Stationary computers The single greatest advance of the computer or word processor over the manual typewriter is not that it is

faster or electronic, but that it

has no outside moving parts.

The great snag of a typewriter was that the carriage moved

right across in every sentence

and created the best possible

way of knocking over a cup of

Miles Kington

coffee. Even if you put your cup of coffee in a place where the carriage couldn't possibly reach it, the typewriter would gradually move round on the desk by vibration and hunt the coffee so stealthily that you would not notice it happening. A word processor cannot do this. 3. The cotton had

The cotton bud is the toothpick of the modern era. it can do everything a toothpick can do but is gentle where a toothpick is harsh. A cotton bud can clean inside tape recorders, wipe away

up things, dry things, wet well, I don't have to go through the list. We all have our favourite uses. 4. The hexagonal pencil and

In the old days, when a pencil or pen could no longer write, we would throw it away. Now we can keep it for winding cassettes. Yes, the only thing that fits neatly inside the hole of a cassette and provides the leverage to tighten the tape in a cassette, or spool it on manually, or even break the tape if necessary, is a pencil or Bic ballpoint. Whoever thought of making pencils the right size for this job (or perhaps of making cassettes the right size for pencils) was

a genius.
5. Piastic credit cards How we ever scraped frost off car windows before we had credit cards I cannot imagine. Also pick Yale locks, etc etc. 6. Dental floss

The initial idea of dental floss was to clean between your teeth, but the survival guides say it is incredibly useful for all sorts of other things such as acting as standby string, emergency thread for sewing,

etc. (Why did nobody ever come forward with the idea that sewing thread, which is stronger, would make an ideal dental floss?) 7. Yoghnrt pots The arrival of the small revolutionised indoor

gardening, as it meant that at last secretaries in offices had something to hand to plant small flowers in. (There were plenty of small flower pots around before that, but they were not to hand in offices.) 8. Pasta Who would ever have imagined that Italy's favourite food would have become Britain's favourite kindergarten art tool? All

those different colours and shapes - butterflies, pipes, wheels, tubes - are rather wasted on Italian dishes. It was almost as if they were waiting to come into their own by being stuck on big white bits of paper by little children in little British schools as components of their first ever art work. And the wonder of it is that if a kindergarten is ever stranded by floods for a few days, the art class can always cook and eat its own drawings.

the commentators

No promises to keep the NHS fully funded

sually the NHS is Labour's Big Issue at election time. But there is surprisingly little sign of it as yet. Remember the War of Jennifer's Ear over a Labour party political broadcast last time? Remember how Robin Cook used to jump up and down like Rumpelstiliskin proclaiming that the Tories were out to privatise the NHS - which no one quite believed? Well, where is the noise now? Only an eerie Last week Jack O'Sullivan

spelt out on these pages the scale of the crisis facing the NHS. It needs close to 3 per cent above inflation each year to keep up with the ageing pop-ulation (40 per cent of NHS money is spent on the over-65s) added to unstoppable demands for new drugs and treatments.
Under the Toxies, the NHS has survived adequately on 2.6 per cent extra a year. Occasionally it dipped down, but loud shricks of pain ensured that the following year it caught up. Easing in the NHS reforms, the Government greased the wheels: when things got tight the NHS got a bung. It hap-pened this year - the NHS was due no real increase but Dor-rell stole an extra £400m from the capital account to put into the current account. (The capital account is cut by a third, a serious problem for next year.)

Times are hard again with a familiar end-of-year squeeze -surgery lists closed, 50-hour waits on trolleys in A & E and accelerated hospital closures. Trusts are also borrowing heav-

ily from next year's budget and delaying pay-ing creditors, sanctioned centrally with glee at mounting debts for incoming Labour. (There are signs of this kind of scorched earth policy in other departments as well.)

But it is the spending plans for the next few years that are truly alarming. Next year the NHS is allotted only a 0.9 per cent increase. In 1998-99, it faces a disastrous cut of -0.6 per cent, and the following year, a calamitons zero increase. Never, ever, in the patchy financial history of the NHS, have there been four years in a row like these. The figures in the Treasury's Red Book would mean a mass flight to private insurance and the end of the NHS as anything but a safety net for the poor. The NHS for once is not waving shrouds but drowning.

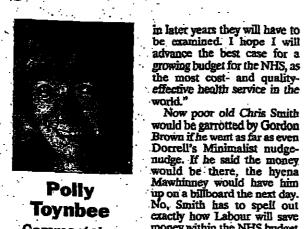
Now that is the doomsday scenario Labour's Iron shadow Chancellor has signed his name in blood to it. So both parties are apparently committed, (on paper), to killing off the NHS. Could this explain their eerie silence? Neither can fight the other effectively

on this shifting quicksand.

Do we really believe they will stick to those figures? I went to see both Stephen Dorrell, the Health Secretary, and Chris Smith. Labour's shadow, to divine their true intent. Of course they both say the NHS is safest in their hands - but the hands of both of them are tied. It's a no-win arm-wrestle.

Stephen Dorrell can get away with more winks and nods on the spending front (not that he is a winking or nodding sort of man). What he in fact said was. "I'm not going to be drawn on what the Budget settlement may be for future years, beyond what's spelled out in the Red Book. But if the case does have to be made for substantial growth, then it will have to be justified on its merits." In other words, he would fight for more.

He adds his campaign speech: "The difference between us and Labour is that we are committing ourselves to real terms growth year on year. We certainly aren't committing ourselves to large growth, but it does commit us not to cut." His features are deadpan, but next comes what passes for that wink and nod: "Judge us by our track record. Over the last 18 years we have delivered real growth to the Health Service. If there are special pressures



Polly Toynbee Commentator of the Year

Stephen Dorrell and Chris Smith both admit they will not be allowed to spend what

the NHS; no flags to wave or battle cries. Both men are is needed deeply absorbed by the NHS' on health vexing intellectual conundrums. Both quote new research on effectiveness - the treatments and drugs that really work - as

can be done."

in later years they will have to be examined. I hope I will

advance the best case for a

the most cost- and quality-effective health service in the

Now poor old Chris Smith

would be garrotted by Gordon

Brown if he went as far as even

Dorrell's Minimalist nudge-

nucige. If he said the money

money within the NHS budget

through clever wheezes in order to plug the horrendous spend-

ing gap. Such as saving £100m

on management, by critting to one-tenth the number of con-

tracts exchanged. No doubt

money can be saved, maybe

Chris Smith makes a convincing case for managing the NHS better - but where's the

money? "I will argue my case

for a fair share at the cabinet

table" he promises. "I will show

that every pound is wisely spent. The NHS will also get its share

of money cascading in as the unemployed go back to work, financed by the windfall tax. It

There is not a shred of ide-

ology in either man's view of

£100m - but it's chickenfeed.

world."

the key to wiser spending. Smith is right in saying that the contracting sys-tem could be streamlined, but this is not really the stuff of election politics.

Out there on the doorstep, every candidate says the NHS is the Big Issue. The irony is that in the real world, it is probably now the least political issue. All that matters is who will fund best. The best guess is that both men would fight valiantly for more money and both goveraments would strain every muscle to bung in enough money to keep it creaking and groaning along as it always has done.

The figures are nonsense, and what they accuse one another of is half-hearted nonsense too. And everyone knows it. The one unshakeable electoral fact is that the whole nation supports the NHS passionately and will not tolerate its demise. The party that se damages it will be a dead party - and the Tories have always known that.

What of the future? In power, Chris Smith may have the hot breath of Rodney Bickerstaffe's low-paid Unison members upon his neck. In opposition, Dorrell may be plagued by some fruitcake ideologue such as Redwood for a leader full of clever ideas for selling off the NHS. Each has his nightmare scenario. Dorrell says perceptively that what he really fears is an NHS that stops changing - by which I take him to warn that Labour may simply offer stasis; new health developments gallop apace and need constant revolution, challenge and response. But Chris Smith is not short of radical ideas: NHS staff can expect jolting new reforms from him, too.

As for this election campaign, an honest and decent man like Chris Smith may choke on promises that Labour would save the NHS while the wicked Tories would privatise it. Every time he tries to make political capital out of scandalous cuts and lengthening waiting lists the other side will bellow back at him: "What would you do, then?" If Labour wants to play the NHS card effectively then Gordon Brown will have to come up with a better story for Chris Smith to tell - and that means more money up front before the election. (It will certainly be there after it.) The NHS is a winner for Labour - but not without visible, credible cash on the table to expose the Tories' killer Red Book plans.

or today's foreign correspondent - that intrepid breed of growing budget for the NHS, as reporter beloved of film directors from Hitchcock to Oliver Stone - the only place to be right now is Hong Kong, in the run-up to Independence Day on 1 July. Britain's about-to-be-former colony is currently pullulating with backs of all shades and conditions, busily tacking between the New Territories the Governor's residence and

> guess the mood of the Chinese authorities in the wake of Mr Deng's demise Or then again, not. What most of them are doing, it seems, is trying to break into

the Mandarin hotel, can-

bankers, trying to second-

vassing street opinions.

the movies. Perhaps inflamed by the sight of Jonathan Dimbleby prowling the streets with his camera team while filming The Last Governor, his television documentary on Chris Patten, to be shown in the early autumn, the assembled backs have been queueing up to appear in Chinese Box, a feature film that uses the colonial handover as the vérité

background to a love story. It's directed by the charmingly named Chinese auteur Wang Dam (who made Smoke, screenplay by Paul Auster) and stars our own Jeremy Irons as a television journalist who deserts his beloved for the far-frominscrutable charms of Gong Li, dreamboat star of Farewell My Concubine. The script, which started life as a Paul Theroux story but dropped his services somewhere along the line, calls for J Irons to roam the streets with a video camera, filming picturesque views of the skyscrapered anthill and talking to his fictional journo peers. A small army of hacks have, in consequence; been volunteering themselves as extras, and smartening up their act (new macintosh, new spiral notethe hope of being immortal-

ised on celluloid. To help the selection process. Irons was invited along to the Foreign Correspondents Club to meet some distinguished scribes. But sadly, according to my man in the Chinnery Bar, although Irons drank a lot of tequila, he was "not overimpressed with the quality of the people he met". Blast it! Back to the word processor.

A charming rider to this story is that the lovely Gong Li recently had to take a break in filming in order to attend a vote. As well as being one of China's top actresses, it seems Ms Li is an important member of the Chinese people's party, the National People's Congress, and had to hit the division lobby in Peking under the Chinese equivalent of a threeline whip. Somehow one cannot imagine this sort of double career happening to Gillian Shephard.



On the political stage: Gong Li (National People's Congress, China), Glenda Jackson (Labour) and Ronnie Carroll ("Home Rule for Hampstead")

... although it would be second nature to Glenda Jackson. Ms Jackson, MP for Hampstead and Highgate, faces an awesome threat at the election. It comes from Mr Ronnie Carroll, the squarejawed Belfast crooner who in the late Fifties represented the nation in the Eurovision Song Contest with "Ring-a-Ding Girl" and "Say Wonderful Things To Me" (he came fourth, alas, both times). Mr Carroll, a Hampstead dweller for 30 years, spends many happy hours at a High Street cafe called the Coffee Cup. which is faced with

"redevelopment". Instead of accepting that times change, buying a jar of Cap Colombie and making his own coffee. the relaxed ex-crooner has decided to man the barricades. He will stand for Parliament on a "Home Rule for Hampstead" ticket; once arrived at

the Commons, his main. indeed sole policy undertaking will be to stop anyone getting their mitts on the NW3 cappuccino machines. Tm prettier than Glenda Jackson," he says ungallantly, "so I'll probably do quite well".

Should the editors of Social Trends, the fascinating yearly investigation of the nation's behavioural patterns, be interested in the state of middle-class enjoyments, I may be able to help. I took part the other night in a fund-raising auction (indeed, I played auctioneer in frock coat and poncey waistcoat) at our local school in Dulwich, where the things under the hammer weren't objets d'art but "Promises". Eighty donors promised to do, or to arrange, certain things for which others (ie, the rest of the 80) would pay large sums of money.

Whether the dead person winds up in a barge, an urn, a Mercedes or a cart, it's the same narrative trajectory

Visitors from distant galaxies would have been intrigued by the range and variety of bourgeois undertakings: lots of baby-sitting, dog-sitting and nanny services. nuturellement; orchestra-loads of music lessons, and tuition in singing, Scottish reels and that peculiar step-to-the-left business called "line dancing"; several hundredweight of carrot cakes and birthday gateaux in exotic post-Jane Asher configurations: plenty of informative trips to museums for other people's doubtless enthralled children; scads of homeopathy sessions and Massage with Essential Oils: lots of self-improvement courses, from German conversation and stress management to acupuncture and Internet surfing (the latter has achieved a spurious cacher among the vodka-martini classes of SE21 since last week's news that the Queen has allowed a bearded colonial to show her the ropes on the World Wide Web). Various servile activities were curtly offered, as if through their proposers' clenched teeth "Three hours' gardening": "A bag of ironing") along with items which, in their naked utilitarianism, went straight to the heart of south London life (promises to re-pot your plants, or sew name-tapes on

school uniforms). In addition to these heady prospects, you could bid for a flight to Le Touquet for lunch ("lunch not provided"). courtesy of a raffish parent with a seven-seater Cessna, or go fly fishing at a secret trout stream on the River Wey. But marketing departments everywhere will be glad to know that Holidays and Meals Cooked By Someone Else remain the most enthusiastically regarded treats in the national psyche. Offers of catered dinner parties were snapped up at top speed: while the top bid - somewhere in the mid-hundreds was paid for a week in a cottage in Aldeburgh. God, it was all so British. I could have sworn I made out the figures of Betjeman, Britten and Rupert Brooke sitting amid the gesticulating bidders. It must have been the wine ...

As far as I'm concerned, Graham Swift can do no wrong; but I wonder if the Australian professor John Frow, who accused the Booker laureate of plagiarising William Faulkner. might have a point. Of course it's a bloody cheek to walk off with somebody else's "structure" and build oneself a house in its image. But if we are to snipe at Mr Swift for "borrowing", ought we not to belabour Mr Faulkner's mouldering remains for doing some borrowing of his own? The plot of As I Lay Dying - a dead man's closest associates ferry his remains through a lovingly described landscape to a mysterious and fantastically symbolic final resting-place - is, of course, a total rip-off from ldylls of the King, a mournful Arthurian epic by Tennyson, who himself pinched it shamefully (and without any knowing winks and nods in the text! from Malory's Le Morte d'Arthur. Whether the dead person winds up in a barge. an urn, a Mercedes or a cart.

stopping. I dunno. Next they'll be saying that Joyce got the idea for Ulysses from someone

trajectory. But once you start

looking into "borrowings" in

literary history, there s no

it's the same narrative

Small voices tell ghastly truths

he British don't like children very much And we particularly don't like children in care who, after longterm abuse and neglect, tend to be awkward and difficult. But they remain our responsibility whether they are sweet little

Miss Pears types or not. The Social Services White Paper published yesterday has been hailed as proposing the most radical shake-up in social services for 25 years. But in one respect it is several steps back when it comes to dealing with children.

It is nearly eight years since the Children Act of 1989, brought in as a result of the Cleveland inquiry, made clear that the interests of the child should be paramount. Yesterday's announcement challenges that, reviving the idea that adults do know best in the end, and a bit of hard discipline never hunt anyone. Especially if they are young tearaways to start off with.

This part of the White Paper, said to be rewritten by Mr Dorrell himself, emphasises the fear that over-enthusiastic social workers are falling victim to weedy political correctness.



Glenda Cooper

We have heard too much about 'firm control' of children. Does anybody remember pindown?

Now that "child abuse" is a phrase that can be uttered in public, it is feared they see it everywhere. Social workers themselves tell a different story. One comments: "Breaking up families? Chance'd be a fine thing. A lot of our work is parents standing in our office demanding that their children kids won't do what they are told be taken away because they can't cope. The White Paper reiterates

that the interests and wishes of the child should be taken into account. But it adds: "The Government ... does not believe however that emphasising the interests of the individual child should be allowed to become an excuse for distorting the proper relationship between children and adults." The paper continues: "When decisions about the care of children are being made it is important to exceedingly dangerous." listen to their views according to their age and capacity but it is equally important not to ascribe to children the capacity to make mature judgements about their interests which are the proper responsibility of adults. To do so is not to protect

Department of Health, this is designed to redress the balance in residential homes. The "proper relationship" and "proper responsibility" for social workers can be translated as: "They should stop caving into children's wishes but exert firm discipline." For example, if and persist in running away, bolt the doors. Stop being sub-

servient to what they say and put your foot down. No one is putting forward the view that children are angelic. Rousseau-esque beings who behave immaculately and never tell lies. "You have to acknowledge children can embroider the truth as we all do," Dave Burchell, assistant director of the British Association of Social Workers, says. "But to suggest we should ignore them is

Children do not make up accusations of ill-treatment or make trouble needlessly because they want their families broken up. All they want is the situation that they are unhappy with dealt with.

Say a teenage girl says she has their interests but to prejudice been sexually abused. There is them." According to the no evidence for that so social gramme it was revealed that make the same mistake again.

services must balance the prob-One of the things they must take into account, although not unquestioningly, is the account of the girl berself. If it does turn out to be a pack of lies, there is still the question to be answered: why is she making up such a serious allegation?

The problem with toughening our attitude to children is that we have not been good enough about listening to children in the past. It may be a great vote-winner to limit *child power" and demand "firm control" over them (although the White Paper concedes there should not be "habitual reliance on physical coercion"). Much the same language is being used for prisoners by both sides of the house: punish and lock up rather than rehabilitate.

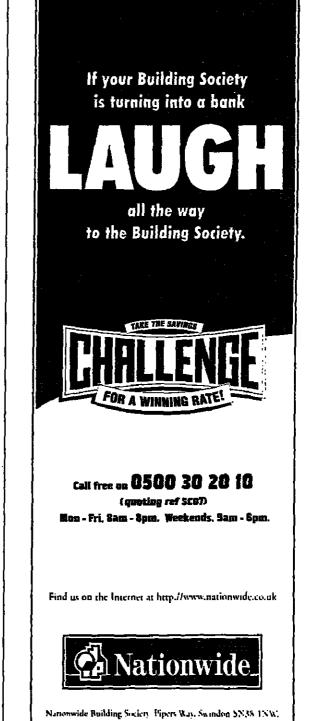
But we have heard too much about "mature judgements" and "firm control". Does anyone remember "pindown" in Staffordshire, the Kincora boys' home in Northern Ireland, Frank Beck in Leicester? In all cases children's voices got drowned out over the years.

On Monday's Panorama pro-

one boy at Greystone Heath. children's home in the North-West, told his mother and the police he was being abused by his housemaster. Dennis Grain. The police were told by the school that he was a "malicious liar" and no action was taken. It was 20 years before Grain was jailed after confessing to paedophile offences.

Last week Judge Huw Daniel jailed Keith Laverack, a former social services manager, at Chester Crown Court after two decades of abuse. "You were confident you could get away with it because the system allowed you to get away with it and you ensured the silence of these children by threats and sweet talk, confident in the knowledge that if these children did complain they would not be believed," the judge said.

Ministers rightly acted last October to tighten up regulation of children's homes. And now it boasts that the abuse in north Wales is being "properly investigated". But the sad fact is that if we had listened to children in the first place, we would not need these investigations now. Mr Dorrell, don't let's



The Earl of Listowel

Billy Listowel was the last Secretary of State for India and Burma, and the last Governor-General of Ghana. He was the sole surviving Labour member of Churchill's wartime coalition government, and the longestserving member of the House of Lords. He was also the first, and so far only, Labour peer to have held the post of Lord Chairman of Committees. He was immensely popular with everyone who knew him, in the House and all over the world

Gentle and warm-hearted, Listowel turned to socialism in the early 1920s. He had experienced profound shock on discovering how poor children lived in a slum near his parents' home in London, At Eton. where he was the only known socialist (except for the headmaster's wife, Mrs Alington), he debated with Quintin Hogg about the House of Lords and the hereditary principle, op-posing both. Although Viscount Ennismore, he preferred to be known at school as Mr Hare.

From Eton he went up to Balliol College, Oxford to read Modern Greats. The Oxford Union provided him with an enjoyable platform for the expression of his political views but, as the socialist heir to an hereditary title, a rare phenomenon at that time, his activities attracted press attention. His father removed him after only a year and asked the Marquess of Willingdon, then Governor-General of Canada, to accept his son as an aide-de-camp. In the event Listowel was

allowed to continue with his university education - at Magdalene College, Cambridge, There he read English and developed an interest in aesthetics. He went to study under Professor Victor Basch at the Sorbonne, and to London University to write a doctoral thesis, published as A Critical History of Modern Aesthetics (1933: expanded as Modern Aesthetics; an historical introduction, 1967).

In 1932 shortly after his father's death. Listowel took his seat in the Lords. Daily attendance at the House was then made up of fewer than 100 peers, all hereditary, who sat for three hours a day, three days a week. The House might deal

with 200 amendments in a session, compared with 2,000-3,000 today. The small number of Labour peers, led by Lord Pon-Queen Victoria's Private Secretary, could be accommodated comfortably on two benches.

When war broke out in 1939, Listowel volunteered to join the ranks. Disqualified from active service on account of his poor eyesight, he joined the RAMC. But during a camp near Aldershot ("the worst experience of my life," he recalled) he was selected for Intelligence Corps training. Once commissioned he was posted to London District in Mayfair, where he became great friends with one of his fellow Second Lieutenants, the philosopher A.J. Ayer.

On one occasion, during a scare about leaks of information from the front. Listowel was sent to sit at a table in the Café Royal to monitor the conversation of British troops home on leave. The noise in the restaurant was such that Listowel was unable to hear a word anyone said; the exercise was swiftly abandoned. Other duties included the interrogation of German prisoners of war, mostsailors, at "the Cage" on Kensington Palace Gardens.

In 1941 Viscount Addison, the Leader of the Labour Party in the Lords, invited Listowel to accept the post of Op-position Chief Whip. Listowel agreed, and Addison obtained permission for his release from the forces. Three years later, in the coalition government, he became Deputy Leader to the Marquess of Salisbury in the Lords, and Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the India Office under Leo Amery, who arranged for him to sit in on meetings of the Cabinet's India Committee.

After the Labour Party's election victory in 1945, the India Committee recommended independence for the subcontinent within the lifetime of the Government. Listowel recalled that whilst, during the war. Attlee had been careful to represent Churchill's conservative views in committee ("very much His Master's Voice," as Listowel put it), once Prime Minister himself. Attlee ensured that

his Cabinet adopted the liberal recommendations of the committee he still chaired.

Stafford Cripps, who had led the Cripps Mission to India during the war, was the India Committee's most dominant member and, according to Listowel, it was Cripps, rather than Attlee, who first suggested Mountbatten as Viceroy. As Supreme Allied Commander, South-East Asia, since 1943, Mounthatten had won the respect and trust of the popular nationalist leadership in India and Burma, a tactor perceived to be of key importance in his qualifications to succeed.

In April 1947, after the terms of Mountbatten's Viceroyalty had been agreed, Listowel, at Mountbatten's request, replaced Lord Pethick-Lawrence as Secretary of State for India. The India Independence Bill was introduced into the Commons on 4 July, and Listowel then steered it through the Lords, unamended, by the end of the month. With Parliament's impending summer recess, any amendment would have jeopardised the timetable for independence on 15 August.

Although invited to Balmoral to receive King George VI's personal thanks for presiding over India's transition to independence, Listowel received no other honour. When asked by the King how he was to be recognised for his contribution, Listowel replied with characteristic modesty that he was too junior a member of the Cabinet to merit recognition. He also had to apologise for not re-turning his seals of office, which the India Office had lost.

As Secretary of State for India, Listowel's duties extended to Burma, for which he remained Secretary of State until independence in early 1948. The move towards self-rule in Burma was already well under way. In April 1947 Aung San's party gained a respectable majority in the country's elections, and almost all the seats in Burma's Constituent Assembly. In June the assembly approved a resolution proposing a republican constitution.

A month later, in July, Listowel was grieved to receive the news that Aung San, the first



Burman since the 18th century to unite his country behind him, had been shot dead, together with most of his ministers, on the orders of his disaffected opponent U Saw. The transition to independence moved forward none the less, Listowel again steering the necessary legislation through the Lords, culminating in indepen-

dence on 4 January 1948.

Listowel's next appointment was as Minister of State for the Colonies, a post he regarded as a generous reward for his work at the India Office. Ministerial responsibility for the British Empire was then divided up into three geographical areas, of which Listowel was assigned South-East Asia and the West Indies. One of his first duties was to go to Malaya to preside over the inaugural session of the

Federal Legislative Council, the first step towards that country's eventual self-government.
During a tour of the West Indies Listowel invited all the

local British governors to Bar-

bados for a meeting - the first time they had met. He visited Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, British Guiana, British Hon-duras, and the Windward and Leeward Islands. Visiting the last. Listowel was distressed to find that the Governor, Oliver Baldwin, son of the former Conservative prime minister, had fallen out with local British residents by airing his revolutionary socialist views. Deep in the jungle of British Guiana, Listowel was astonished to discover Amerindian schoolchildren learning English from a textbook which opened with the words, The Scottish nobleman strode

out of his castle into the snow." In 1957 Listowel received an invitation from Kwame Nkrumah, the socialist Prime Minister of Ghana, to succeed Sir Charles Arden-Clark as Ghana's Governor-General.

Nkrumah had encountered Lis-

towel in London, and was fa-

miliar with his activities as a member of the Fabian Society Colonial Bureau. Listowel looked back on the three years he spent in Ghana as especially happy. "As Governor-General," he reflected, "everybody is nice to you. You have no enemies or carping critics." He was scrupulous in remaining above politics and when Nkrumah, prior to an overseas tour, asked him to select one of two Ministers, neither of whom Nkrumah wished to offend, to act

as deputy in his absence, Listowel

Terry Nation

unhesitatingly declined to assist. Listowel got to know Nkrumah well, and was struck by his devotion to the Queen. Greeting Listowel on his arrival in Accra, Nkrumah's first words were When is the Queen coming to Ghana?" When the question of honouring Nkrumah arose, Lis-towel recommended he be made a Privy Counsellor, an honour which was received with delight. One of the happiest experiences of Nkrumah's life, Listowel judged, was the few days he once spent at Balmoral.

While in Ghana Listowel visited all the country's five Regions every year. In spite of the technically informal nature of these visits, Listowel was wel-comed by each of the Regions' Paramount Chiefs in full regalia, with traditional dancing. He enioved a notable success in restor-

ing relations between Nkrumah and the Chief of the Ashanti whose people had stoned Nkrumah on a visit he made to Kumasi - by arranging for them to meet at the races in Accra. In 1960, some months after the Duke of Edinburgh's suc-

cessful visit to Ghana (Listow-el observed that no other visitor to Ghana during his time there received such a rapturous reception), Ghana became an independent republic within the Commonwealth. Due to a mechanical fault, Listowel's plane, scheduled to leave Ghana two hours before the country became a republic, took off only minutes before the deadline expired, thus narrowly avoiding a constitutional crisis.

As Chairman of Committees in the House of Lords from 1965 to 1976, Listowel adhered strictly to the apolitical line demanded by the post. For many years afterwards he con-tinued to sit on the Woolsack as one of the Lord Chancellor's Deputy Speakers. Describing his stance, in later life, as "more social reformer than socialist", he maintained a keen interest in foreign and Commonwealth affairs, human rights, and Third

George Ireland

William Francis Hare, politician: born 28 September 1906; styled as Viscount Ennismore 1924-31; succeeded 1931 as fifth Earl of Lis-towel: Member (Labour), LCC for East Lewisham 1937-46, for Battersea North 1952-57; Labour Chief Whip, House of Lords 1941-44; Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, India Office, and Deputy Leader, House of Lords 1944-45; Postmaster General, 1945-47; PC 1946; Secretary of State for India 1947, and Burma 1947-48; Minister of State for the Colonies 1948-50; Parliamentary Secretary, Minister of Agriculture and Fish-eries 1950-51: Governor-General of Ghana 1957-60; GCMG 1957; of Chairman of Committees, House of Lords 1965-76; Deput: Speak-er, House of Lords 1976; married 1933 Indith de Marffy-Mantuano (one daughter; marriage dissolved 1945), 1958 Stephanie Currie (né: Wise; one daughter; marriage dissolved 1963), 1963 Pamela Read (née Day, two sons, one daughter); died London 12 March 1997.

In the 1960s and 1970s, Terry Nation was one Britain's most to a spectacular range of mer- and Frankie Howerd, before

chanical monsters that proved to be Dr Who's most menacing and durable opponents and. happily for their inventor, the most commercially popular. His inspiration for the Daleks, whose mechanised bodies appear to glide across the ground, came from watching the

Georgian State dance troupe on television. The female dancers. with their long voluminous skirts, seemed to have no legs as they smoothly criss-crossed the stage. The Daleks were an instant success with the viewing audience and returned to threaten the good doctor in semously was the inclusion of the word "Dalek" in the Oxford English Dictionary.

Born in Cardiff, Nation began his professional career as a stand-up comedian, but, though audiences liked his jokes, they didn't much care for the way he told them, so he became a scriptwriter instead. In 1955, in his mid-twenties, he moved to London and joined Associated London Scripts, whose stable of writers included Spike Milligan, Johnny Speight, Ray Simpson and Alan Galton - Tony Hancock's writing team. Terry Nation was to write some 200 ries after series, as well as on the radio comedy scripts for the

big screen. They also gave rise likes of Harry Worth, Eric Sykes comedy for popular television which unashamedly tipped its to a spectacular range of mer- and Frankie Howerd, before drama. Throughout the Sixties hat at the 1939 Bob Hope clashis wife Kate and their children.

to whom he turned. Their collaboration was a friendly if sometimes frantic one, but did little to reverse the slide in Hancock's fortunes. It was round about this time, in 1963, that Nation was invited to write some episodes for a new television series. Dr Who, the brainchild of Sydney Newman, head of BBC television drama. His initial inclination was to turn down the offer, being firmly of the view that the programme was destined for the scrapheap. Changing his mind and taking the job, he said later, was the shrewdest move he ever made.

prolific and successful writers for television. But he will be best remembered as the creator of the Daleks, the sinister me
chandising spin-offs that made their creator a wealthy man. One spin-off that brought no the Daleks, the sinister me
chandising spin-offs that made their creator a wealthy man. One spin-off that brought no troyalties but pleased him enor
Nation was one of the writers

he wrote for one successful sic The Cat and the Canary. For television he created the series of people who survives, the story of a group of people who survive a killer ing through the ranks to become script editor and associate producer on the later programmes. The hallmark of a Terry Nation screenplay was a crisp, imaginative plot, laced with sharp, witty dialogue. However in-

> used to good effect. By the early Seventies he felt able to branch out on projects of his own, With Clive Exton he wrote and produced a feature film, The House in Nightmare Park (1973), starring Frankie Howerd and Ray Milland (a former pupil at Nation's school in

seldom far away, and always

virus which wipes out most of the world's population. This was followed by Blake's Seven, the inter-galactic adventures of a band of outcasts. Like Dr Who, the latter developed a cult following. tense the drama, humour was .

The project that gave him the most pleasure, however, was his children's book Rebecca's World (1975), a wonderfully imaginative adventure story named af-ter his daughter. A best-seller in the UK, the book was also published in several other comtries, including the United

In 1979, Terry Nation fulfilled Cardiff), a comedy thriller a long-time ambition to work in

Rebecca and Joel. In the years that followed he worked for Columbia, 20th Century Fox and ideas and script doctoring, but never managed to repeat the success he had enjoyed in Britain. His final few years were dogged by ill-health in the form of emphysema. Nation had an attractive

quality of self-deprecating humour and liked nothing better than to reduce his family and friends to helpless laughter, preferably over a drink or two.

Graham Tarrant

Terry Nation, writer: born Cardiff 8 August 1930; married 1968 Kate Gaunt (one son, one daughter); died Los Angeles 9 March

Ossie O'Brien

Ossie O'Brien was an MP for 11 weeks and one day. Yet, during the Darlington by-election, the curtain-raiser to the 1983 general election, and in his fleeting days as an MP he won the affection of his colleagues. Roy Hattersley described him as the best by-election candidate of the decade.

He was born Oswald O'Brien into a family of teachers in 1928, in Darlington. From St Mary's

Faircroft College and Durham University before National Service in the Navy.

After experience in a number of heavy industries in the north of England he became a Workers' Educational Association tutor and an immensely popular staff tutor at Durham University. In 1966 he had the ill luck to lose by one vote at the selection conference of the Labour Party in Darlington. In Grammar School he went to his maiden and only speech, on

14 April 1983, he said with a

My entry to the House at this time however is inevitably tinged with sad-ness and regret, as it results from the ness and regret, as it results from the death of my much-loved and re-spected colleague and predecessor. Ted Fletcher, Many honourable members will not know, although some Labour members know, that in 1962 I was beaten by Ted Fletcher for the Darlington nomination by the narrowest possible margin. Legend has it that it was a majority of one. Nevertheless, we worked amicably together over successive elections.

Ted Fletcher's record speaks for itself. He served the people of Dar-lington for more than 18 years and was working on constituents' prob-lems until shortly before his death. recall him telephoning me just a few days before he died and insisting that even if he could not go to London and to the House he could at least write letters to ministers and to government departments.

Ossie O'Brien put all personal disappointments to the back of his mind for the sake of the cause of the Labour Party.

Those who took part in the campaign will never forget the bitterly cold by-election of 24 March 1983 among the warmhearted people of Darlington. O'Brien scored 20,544 to the 18,132 of Michael Fallon and the 12,735 of Alan Cook standing for the Social Democrat Par-However 78 days later the situation was to be reversed and Fallon went on to a ministerial career, staving off challenges

from O'Brien in 1987.

After he left Parliament O'Brien worked for Alcohol Concern and contributed to the literature considering the increasing problem of drugs in society. But for the verdict of the electorate and the ill luck 18 years earlier of such a close selection conference result, he would undoubtedly have made a serious contribution to Parliament in the field of education and training.

Oswald O'Brien, politician and teacher: born Darlington 6 April 1928; Staff Tutor, Durham University 1964-78; Director of Studies and Vice-Principal, Cooperative College 1978-83; Chairman, Society of Industrial Tutors 1978-82; MP (Labour) for Darlington 1983; Director, Education Division, Alcohol Concern 1984-86. Director, Workplace Advisory Service 1986-97; married 1950 Freda Pascoe (one son); died Dar-lington 10 March 1997.



Births. **Marriages** & Deaths

BIRTHS

SUTTON: To Michelle (née Cridge) and Peter, a son. Robert Edward, on 3 March 1997.

BROWNING: Robert, died peacefully in the Royal Free Hospital, on 11 March: Funeral to take place on Thursday 20 March, Ipm. at Golders Green Crematorium. Enquiries to J.H. Kenyon, 0171-794 3535.

IN MEMORIAM

WATTS: Stephen Glass, writer and journalist, born Glasgow 1912 died Surrey 1996. Always remembered. For Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS, please telephone 0171-293 2012.

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

Changing of the Guard

Birthdays Miss Valerie Amos, former Chief Ex-

ecutive. Equal Opportunities Commission, 43; Lord Borrie QC, former Director-General of Fair Trading, 66; Mr Terence Brady, playwright, nov-elist and actor, 58; Lord Butterworth, former Vice-Chancellor, Warwick University, 79: Sir Michael Checkland, former Director-General of the BBC, 61; Miss Lesley Collier, balle-rina, 50; Mr Lionel Friend, conducopera. 52: Sir Graham Hart, per-manent secretary, Department of Health, 57: Sir Robert Mark, former Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, 80; Mr James Marshall MP, 56; Sir Henry Nevile, former Lord Licutement of Lincolnshire, 77: Dr David Peace, glass engraver and town planner, 82; Air Commodore Helen Renton, former director, WRAF, 66; Mr Neil Sedaka, song-writer and singer, 58; Mr Peter Vig-

Anniversaries

Birthse Charles Grey, second Earl Grey, former prime minister. 1764; George Seferis, poet and diplomat. 1900. Deaths: Richard Burbage, actor, 1619; Tsar Alexander II of Russia. assassinated 1881; Angela Brazil, writer, 1947. On this day: as predicted by Halley in 1682, Halley's Comet came to its perihelion, 1758; the So-

viet Congress voted to abolish the political monopoly of the Communist party, 1990. Today is the Feast Day of St Ansovinus, St Euphrasia or Eupravia, St Gerald of Mayo, St Nicephorus of Constantinople and Saints Roderic and Salomon.

Lectures

National Gallery: Mari Griffith. Monet (ii): Trainspotting with Monet", Ipm.

Victoria and Albert Museum: Clare Ford-Willie, "Antonia Rosselino and the Later 15th Century", 2.30pm. Tate Gallery: Justine Hopkins, The Proper Study of Mankind: transformations of the human figure

British Museum: Lucy Goodison, Prehistoric Cretan Sunworship: palaces, settlements and shrines National Portrait Gallery: Liz Ride-

Annoual Fortrait Gattery: Liz Ride-al, "Jacob Epstein", I.10pm. Gresham College, Barnard's Inn Hall, London ECI: Professor Simon Lee, "Judging the Scarman Report (on Northern Ireland, Red Lion Square and Brixton)", 5,30pm. Leicester University: Professor Judith McKenzie, "Lacustrine Records and Climate Change , 4.15pm: Professor Aubrey Newman, "Teaching and Researching the Holocaust Fifty Years

Part-time workers cannot claim over lost pension rights Wolvertrampton Healthcare NHS

Trust and others: Fletcher and others v Midland Bank plc; Court of Appeal (Lord Justice Waite. Lord Justice Otton, Lord Justice Schiemann) 13 February 1997 Women part-time workers who

had not until recently appreciated or been advised that their exclusion from occupational pension schemes was unlawful under European Community law were nevertheless timebarred from pursuing complaints after the expiry of the six-month limitation period imposed by section 2(4) of the

Equal Pay Act 1970. The Court of Appeal dismissed appeals by a number of women employees against preliminary rulings by the Employment Appeal Tribunal. The women claimed that as part-time or former part-time employees, doing jobs pre-

dominantly done by women, they were indirectly discrimi-

nated against by being denied access to contributory and noncontributory pension schemes for which full-time employees were eligible. This was done by making membership of the schemes conditional upon a minimum number of hours worked per week.

Such discrimination was permissible under domestic law until the coming into force of the Occupational Pension Schemes (Equal Access to Membership) Amendment Regulations 1995. Before then, though permissi-ble under domestic law, it was unlawful under European Community law (see Froege and Fisscher (Case C-57/93) [1994] ECR I-4541).

Right of access to a pension scheme has been held to constitute part of pay for the purposes of article 119 of the FC Treaty, under which member LAW REPORT

13 March 1997

states "shall . . . maintain the application of the principle that men and women should receive equal pay for equal work, and of the Equal Pay Directive (75/117/EC)

The question was whether the existence of the six-month limitation period for equal pay claims under section 2(4) and the two-year limit on compensation in section 2(5) of the Equal Pay Act prevented the employees now enforcing rights under community law of which, during the relevant periods, they were unaware they possessed.

ohn Cavanagh (Unison, Graham Clayton, Reynolds Porter Chamberlain, Michael Scott & Co) for the emplayees in the first case; General Caus QC, Clive Lewis and Tim Kerr (Eversheds, Norton Rose, Manchester City Council, Stockpan Metropolitan Barough Council, Wolverlampton Met-

ropolitan Borough Council, Barningham City Council, Lancashire County Council) for the employers; Jane McNeill (Lawford & Co) for the employees in the second case; Patrick Elias QC and Jason Coppell (Booth & Co. Leeds) for the employers. Nicholas Paines (Treasury Solicitor) for the Secretary of State.

Lord Justice Schiemann said

the fact that there had not until recently been widespread ap-preciation of the fact that community law gave a right not to be discriminated against in respect of pension schemes did not mean that it was impossible in practice to start proceedings within the sixmonth limitation period imposed by section 2(4) of the 1970 Act, so as to justify the court disapplying the limitation provisions.

The appellants had always

rights and could have asserted them. As a matter of English law, the courts would have to give precedence to any directly effective community right and disregard any provision of domestic law purporting to ex-clude or limit that community right: see Biggs v Somersei [1996] ICR 364 at 374 to 376.

In relation to the two-year limit on back compensation for lost pay under section 2(5) of the 1970 Act, it was fair to say that anyone now trying to enter a pension scheme to which, on its face, they were denied entry years ago, would not be credited with all their years service. But this was because they did not invoke their rights under article 119 soon enough. They were thus in a situation

which was typical of anyone faced with a limitation period who had let time slip by for perfectly understandable reasons.

Paul Magrath, Barrister

business & city BUSINESS & CITY EDITOR: JEREMY WARNER

NatWest to announce disciplinary measures over £50m loss SFA confirms it is looking into Warburg share sale

City bonus bonanza keeps on rolling

Jeremy Warner and Michael Harrison

Two of the City's leading investment banks yesterday unveiled oig increases in bonus payments; fuelling fears that bumper pay-outs may encourage risk-taking of the kind recently criticised by the Bank of England.

Schroders said that staff costs last year rose by £109m to £464m - an increase of 30 per cent. About half the increase was due to the payment of higher bonuses after the bank

earned record profits of £239m. Meanwhile SBC Warburg. the Swiss-owned investment bank, disclosed that costs last year had risen by a third to \$2.6bn (£1.63bn), an increase blamed partly on "performance

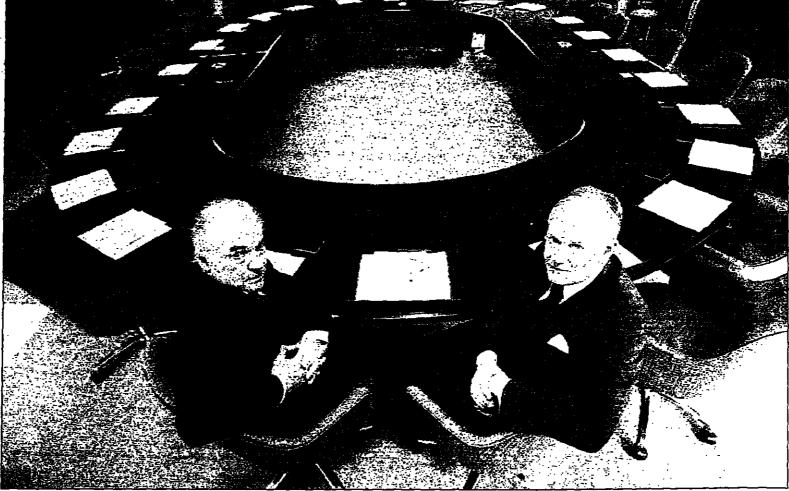
related compensation". While traders at Schröders and SBC Warburg are enjoying bonuses running into six figures in many cases, Nat West is today expected to announce disciplinary measures, including bonus cuts, reprimands and dismissals. following the discovery of a £50m hole in its interest rate

The derivatives trader allegedly responsible for the loss, Kyriacos Papouis, has since resigned from his new employers Bear Sterns while a senior trader, Neil Dodgeson, has been suspended by Nat West for failure to supervise pending an internal inquiry.

Further disciplinary action is expected today following the completion of the inquiry by the accountants Coopers and Ly-brand and the lawyers Linklaters and Paines.

Schroders disclosed that staff costs per employee last year rose from £78,500 to £93,300 as the bank took on an extra 1,450 employees. The ratio of staff costs to income rose from 44.4 per cent to 48.5 per cent. However, pre-tax profits per employee also rose from £43,600 to

Win Bischoff, chairman of the bank, said that what the Bank of England had said about the danngers of the City's bonus culture was "a useful adjunct to the debate". But he stressed that Schroders operated a deferred bonus scheme and had done so for several years.



Bonus debate: Schroders' vice chairman Peter Sedgwick (left) and chairman Win Bischoff yesterday

The increase in bonuses at SBC Warburg was also accom-panied by a 55 per cent increase in profits to \$607m and a big improvement in its return on captal to 16.4 per cent.

However, the results were marred by confirmation from the Securities and Futures Authority that it was investigating the alleged mishandling by Warburg of a large share sale late last year. At least two senior traders have already been disciplined over the episode.

Peter Corrigan, head of French equities, resigned last week and a derivatives trader has also left.

The allegations revolve around the liquidation of the Kleinwort Benson European Privatisation Investment Trust (Kepit) late last year. Warburg was accused by Merrill Lynch, acting for Kepit, of deliberately marking down the prices of the shares just ahead of executing the trade, so disadvantaging the client to its own benefit.

As reported by The Independent at the time, the affair was quickly settled to Kepit's satisfaction after Warburg agreed to pay more advantageous prices, at a cost to itself of £3m-£5m. Warburg said yesterday that

as soon as it became aware of the allegations an immediate investigation was launched by its compliance department and the bank quickly moved to ensure the client had not been disadvantaged. It confirmed that the outcome of its deliberations been deliberately depressed by

had resulted in the departure from the bank of two traders. At the time The Independent quoted a Warburg source as say-ing "It's no big deal. This sort of thing happens the whole time. This was a programme trade. The timing had been pre-set and it was unfortunate that it occurred when prices were weak as a re-

sult of a rise in interest rates". However, Merrill Lynch and others were persistent in their allegation that the prices had Photograph: Brendan Corr/FT

market makers and called on the SFA to investigate. SBC Warburg is now part of Swiss Bank Corporation, which coincidentally announced a 29 per cent leap in total gross operating profits last year to \$2,9bn. However, the company said that as a result of a new methodology for accounting for credit provisions and a change in property valuation practices, the result for the year is a one off technical loss of \$1.5bn".

Comment, page 21

Call for minimum EU tax on savings

Yvette Cooper

French and German finance ministers yesterday called for an EU-wide minimum tax on financial investments, a move which is fiercely opposed by the UK Government

Jean Arthuis, the French finance minister, said the EU hould agree a code of good conduct to eliminate the risk of unfair competition between member states for tax revenues. Speaking after bilateral talks in Lyon between the French and German finance ministers and central bankers, Mr Arthuis said: "We are determined to put active pressure on the European Commission to have this code of good conduct in place rapidly. We cannot tolerate these forms of unfair competition. It is the future of the European Union which is at stake.

A new EU taxation policy group, charged with exploring possibilities for co-ordination of tax policy, met on Tuesday. Tax competition was the main topic of discussion. A spokesman for Commissioner Mario Monti. chairman of the group, said: We are not at this stage considering legislation. We hope instead to achieve a political consensus over tax co-ordina-

tion in a series of areas." The French, German and Belgian governments are concerned about the differences between taxes on capital in EU countries. Germany in particular fears that savers are slipping across the border to set up sav-ings accounts in Luxembourg which, like the UK, has no withholding tax on interest from savings. Another fear is that tax competition will push capital and corporation taxes down across Europe, forcing member states to raise taxes on employment instead. thereby threatening jobs.

But the chances of EU-wide measures being introduced to tackle the problem look slim. Tax policy is not covered by qualified majority voting, so EU proposals can be vetoed by

said: "We are strongly opposed to a minimum withholding tax, and to anything which would be a threat to London as a financial centre. If Germany has a problem with tax competition from Luxembourg that is for Investment Column, page 20 I them to sort out themselves."

Iceland tries to thaw out critics with buy-back

Patrick Tooher

third of its shares as the struggling frozen food retailer reported its first drop in profits in

News of the capital consolidation gave a much-needed wost to Iceland's shares, which have been in virtual free fall since they hit a high of 248p four years ago. Last night they closed at 99.5p, up 12p.

However, analysts were said the buyback should be

unimpressed. "It is a shortterm expedient not a long-term ing is introducing a degree of financial leverage on the business. If I were a shareholder I

proposal or sell the shares." The operation to buy three out of every eight shares at 105p will reduce Iceland's issued equity by 35 per cent. Malcolm Walker, Iceland's

chairman and chief executive,

welcomed by investors. "Sellers can get out a premium. I think receiand yesterday unveiled solution, "said Frank Davidson we will end up with a more supplies to buy back more than a lat James Capel. "All they are doportive shareholder register."

It is the second time Iceland has returned cash to shareholders. A year ago it spent cent. It was never really going £42m to buy back 27 million of to be a runner. its own shares.

Mr Walker admitted that Iceland's directors had considered a management buyout because of frustration at the company's low rating on the stock market. "We'd have been mad not to, it was looking so cheap," he said.

de-listing. If you look at the likes of Branson or Lloyd-Webber who took their companies private they had a big slug of the equity. We only have 6.5 per

Mr Walker was speaking after lceland reported a drop in pre-tax profits from £72.6m to £56.2m in the year to 28 December, breaking a 25-year record of uninterrupted growth. Sales grew by 3.8 per cent to £1.47bn, though like-for-like

"But nobody likes the idea of a volumes fell by an estimated 1.2 chains to introduce frozen food per cent. Earnings per share dropped from 17.0p to 13.2p, though the dividend was raised by 2.9 per cent to 5.4p.

Clwyd-based Iceland has

seen its share of retail food market rivals such as Tesco. Sainsbury and Safeway matched its lower prices, stayed open for longer and introduced marketing initiatives like lovalty cards. Iceland has also felt the chill from the trend to out-of-town stores and the move by bigger capital. BZW will ask some of

ranges of their own. BZW is arranging a £285m loan facility to support the proposed capital reduction, ac-

cording to banking sources.

About £118m of the loan will be used to fund the buyback. The loan facility, which has been fully underwritten by Barclays Bank, will also be used to refinance existing credit lines following the capital recon-

Iceland plans to create 1,000 iobs from the launch of a new home delivery service. The service has already been tested in Chester. Portsmouth and the any country. North-east of England, resulting in 'very encouraging sales increases", said Mr Walker, It will now be extended nationwide. Customers will be offered free delivery by for purchases of £25 or more within a 10 mile radius of its stores.

Iceland's existing banks to join

the deal as sub-underwriters.

Strong pound to hit results, **Reed warns**

Tom Stevenson City Editor

Reed became the latest victim of the strength of sterling yes-grday, warning that the high-flying pound would peg back profits in the first half of this year. Analysts took the red pen to forecasts and the shares slipped 17p to 1.156.5p despite a 12 per cent rise in underlying a 12 per cent rise in underlying profits in the year to December and the promise that Reed's consumer books arm will soon be back on the block.

Reed withdrew its consumer books division from the market two years ago after an auction attracted bids of £70m-£80m, much less than the company had hoped to raise. It recently sold a portfolio of some of the business's best-known imprints to Random House for about £20m, but said yesterday it was 27.2p. confident the remaining reference. illustrated and children's become effective in May in a bid

books would soon be attractive enough to achieve a sensible

Profits last year of £806m were up from 1995's £736m but at the bottom end of analysts' expectations. Forecasts for the current year were reined in to about £865m as analysts predicted underlying growth of around 10 per cent would be held back to about half as much by currency factors.
Nigel Stapleton, deputy

chairman, said: "The strength of sterling in recent months will, if sustained, have a marked effect on the Reed Elsevier combined businesses' reported results this year, particularly in the first half."

Earnings per share in the year to December were 9 per cent higher at 56.2p and the dividend was increased by 11 per cent to



Nigel Stapleton: Electronic publishing could be costly

to reduce the currently heavy share price.
Mr Stapleton also warned

that recent impressive increases in operating margin would be held back by the cost of expanding the company's moves into electronic publishing.

enues came from electronic information dissemination such as services provided to American lawyers by its successful recent acquisition, Lexis-Nexis, and the company had set a medium-term target of 35 to 40

25.3 per cent

vote for it. He said a fifth of Reed's rev-

During the year there was a 1.6 percentage point improvement in operating margin to

Investment column, page 20

Unions' company hit list | Barclays finally banks on Labour win

Barrie Clement Labour Editor

Evidence emerged yesterday that unions are drawing up hit lists of companies in anticipation of "union-friendly" legislation to be passed by a Labour government

Union officials are targeting individual organisations and industrial sectors in preparation for the introduction of a law enforcing recognition where more than 50 per cent of employees

The MSF white collar union yesterday announced its intention to "organise" employees in the North Sea oil industry. Roger Spiller, the union's national offshore secretary, pointed out that BP, Conoco. Mobil and Marathon were all resisting recognition but were now the subject of a new cam-paign by MSF.

The union also claimed yesterday that it had won negoti-ating rights at Elf's North Sea subsidiary after a 99.4 per cent vote in favour of recognition in

papers issued, 159 returned votes in favour of union rights. with one spoiled paper and none against. It was the first vote taken in advance of Labour legislation and could mean that other ballots will be held elsewhere in advance of the law be-

ing passed and to avoid any possible litigation. Roger Lyons, general secre-tary of MSF, said the vote was also held as a result of an initiative taken by the works council, set up under European law.

Representatives from France and Sweden on the council backed the idea of a ballot among British employees on the grounds that the company should have a "democratic attitude" to all its employees irrespective of nationality.

The latest issue of MSF Re-

port, the union's journal, points out that the vote for recognition was achieved despite Elf's insistence that offshore workers did not want to be represented by a union. The union however

a ballot organised by concilia-tion service Acas, Of 183 ballot at the Piper Bravo platform sister to Piper Alpha where more than 160 workers were killed in an explosion - together with colleagues at the Claymore and Saltire rigs had now secured full union rights.

An Elf spokeswoman suid vesterday that the union would still have to prove that half or more of employees were fully paid-up members of MSF. "It is one thing to vote for recognition, quite another to be a

union member. she said. Mr Spiller said the union would be stepping up its cam-paign elsewhere in the sector where British unions had consistently failed to secure a foothold. It is understood the Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union is also targeting the offshore industry in a

Mr Lyons said the union intended to take "full advantage" of the new atmosphere which would be created by a Labour

campaign to win negotiating

sells disastrous property firm

Tom Stevenson

Barclays finally drew a line under one of its most disastrous loans yesterday after it sold Imry, the property developer it has owned by default since the company's collapse in 1991. During the dark days of the recession Imry came to symbol-ise Barclays hubris in becoming the biggest lender of any high street bank to the previously high-flying property sector. Imry, which owns the Shires

shopping centre in Leicester. was acquired yesterday by Dutch property company Ro-damos for £249m. The deal follows weeks of speculation which had paired Imry with Ellion Bernerd's Chelstield and Capital shopping centres.

Both companies already own shopping centres, widely viewed as the property sector's hottest assets, but are understood to have been unprepared to enter a bidding war with Rodamco. The deal is the first UK acquisition for the Dutch company which launched an unsuccessful tilt at Hammerson in 1989.

Barclays has always made clear it was holding Imry solely for the purpose of selling it once the property market recovered. Banks that inherit property companies by default during recessions have gained the reputation for selling those unwanted assets at the bottom of the market after rashly lending to them at the peak of the previous beem. Barclays attempted to buck

that trend by restructuring the foolhardy lending. Since 1992 company in 1992 to allow its management to operate it out of recession.

Imry is Barclays' most spectacular property disaster, hav-ing cost it £240m in provisions

to date. In 1989, the bank financed a £314m takeover of the quoted company by Marketchief, a vehicle backed by Eagle Star. Development & Realisation Trust, Prudential-Bache and Wolfgang Stolzenberg. a private investor. Barclays provided loans of more than £200m to support the venture. Then, in June 1991, the bank's exposure was doubled in

a restructuring to about £420m. In early 1993 Barelays re-vealed had debt provisions of £2.5bn, including £1bn to cover its ambitious foray into commercial property during the previous five years. The property boom of the late 1980s was backed by more than £40bn of bank debt and Barclays, of all the clearing banks, was the heaviest lender.

It provided large corporate loans to high-profile and aggressive property developers, such as Olympia & York, Speyhawk and Imry, much of it at the peak of the boom.

Barclays excelled at what is known as relationship banking. and backed such individuals as Gerald Ronson, of Heron International. Speyhawk's Trevor Oshorne and Martin Myers at Imry. The rationale was that these men were talented businessmen and would make money for themselves and for Barclays.

A spokesman yesterday said there was no danger of Barclays repeating the mistakes of the 1980s, claiming it had sophisticated, computerised risk-assessment systems to prevent there has been a 37 per cent reduction in the size of Barclays property lending book, which now accounts for 7.6 per cent of total lending compared with 12.2 per cent four years ago.

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Reed achieves impressive margins

Yesterday's 17p fall in Reed Inter-national's share price to 1156.5p might be seen as a pretty churlish reaction to a 12 per cent rise in profits from continuing operations, yet another rise in the publishing group's trading margin to an impressive 25.3 per cent and a flawless conversion of profits into the hard cash that is the lifeblood of

The 11 per cent rise in headline pre-tax profits to £805m was at the bottom end of analysts' expectations, but it represents an enviable progression from Aerospace the £435m achieved five years ago. Earnings per share of 56.2p rose from last year's 51.7p and the dividend rose in line with profits to 27.2p.

The fall reflected two concerns. TI has been one of Britain's few First, that the relentless increase in Reed International's return on sales is reaching a plateau. Second, that the recent strength of sterling will hit profits, especially in the first half of this

Both worries are real, but they should not distract from the underlying strength of Reed's dull, but increasingly powerful, portfolio of printed and

electronic products. Four years ago, Reed was making 20 per cent on its sales and boldly set out its stall to increase that to 25 per cent within five years. It has reached that benchmark early thanks to careful pruning of its lower-margin products, a focus on the higher return activities

and cost-cutting. Plainly, with returns of more than 40 per cent in scientific journals and only 15 per cent in what remains of Reed's consumer products there remains scope for rebalancing the margin mix upwards. The company is open, however, about the depressing effect on margins that continuing invest-ment in the transition to electronic delivery of information will entail. The days of year in, year out margin

The trick now is to grow the top line, which means more of the organic growth that characterised last year and an acceleration of the acquisitions that have already involved Reed spending £450m in the past year or so. With net borrowings of £200m, interest cover of 17 times and free cash flow last year of £300m Reed is blessed with an awesome war chest if it can find the right company at the right price.

What Reed really needs is to find another Lexis-Nexis to buy. The US publisher of legal information saw margins rise another 3 percentage points to 23 per cent, more than twice the return it was making when acquired. A 10 per cent rise in sales led to an impressive 29 per cent profits rise.

On the basis of slightly downgraded profits this year of about £865m, the

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN Down, that adds up to around £500m of business for the group and the orders

EDITED BY TOM STEVENSON

Reed: At a glance

shares trade on a prospective price-earnings ratio of 19. That's a hefty premium to the market, which, despite Reed's high quality of earnings, is barely warranted by the rate of profits growth. Hold.

takes off at TI

candidates in the engineering industry worth the title "world class". Few in the sector can boast the seals-to-landing gear group's six-year record of consistent underlying profits growth and 12 years' of dividend increases, achieved under veteran chairman Sir Christopher Lewinton. Yesterday's figures, boring in their predictability, continued that trend, showing all parts of the business firing on all cylinders.

The 16 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £211m before £21.1m of net exceptional gains from the disposal of four small engineering operations looks

TI's market leadership shone through in the results of its John

Operating profit by activity

Five year record

Crane and Bundy operations. In the former, Crane's world-wide reach is allowing it to cash in on the increasing demand by customers for single suppliers. It has signed up 50 partnership agreements so far, including six this year. The underlying 13 per cent growth in profits to £97m was ahead of both a flat market for its process

Meanwhile, Bundy shrugged off flat or falling automotive markets in North America and Europe to record a 13 per cent underlying uplift to profits of £79m last year. That gives confidence that it will continue to prosper in the similar markets expected for 1997.

industry customers and its own sales

This year will see the first real contribution from Forsheda, the Swedish polymer engineering company controversially acquired by TI in November for £189m. That could chip in £14m to £15m in 1997, according to

Hoare Govett. But the main story this year should be the aerospace side. Much criticised for overpaying for Dowty in 1992, that business is storming ahead on the back of the doubling and tripling of aeroplane orders at Boeing and Airbus last year. Worth up to \$2m a time for

Share price (Pence)

1200

1100

500°

are still rolling in.

Another £220m or so of bolt-on acquisitions will keep the pot boiling this year, even if currency could represent a £5m to £7m hit, according to Hoare Govett.

On that broker's forecast of £238m. the shares, up 12p at 576p, stand on a forward multiple of 17. A firm hold.

iceland moves to warm hearts

Just as Trafalgar House revealed it was a busted flush when it mounted a desperate bid for Northern Electric, so Iceland confirmed its core frozen food siness was in deep trouble when it tried to buy Littlewoods' chain of high street department stores 18 months ago for £450m. Norway's Kvaemer eventually put Trafalgar House out of its misery. But poor old Iceland has had to limp along alone, unloved and

Since the Littlewoods bid, Iceland's share price has halved as a combination of price wars, late openings and loyalty card launches saw like-for-like sales growth in the fiercely competitive food retail market virtually grind to a

Such has been Iceland's frosty reception in the City that Malcolm Walker, the chairman and chief executive, considered following in Alan Sugar and Anita Roddick's footsteps by attempting to take the company

The consensus among analysis yesterday was that the latest wheeze - a 35 per cent capital consolidation - will do little to address the issue of Iceland's ong-term profitability.

There is also concern about cost controls if Iceland's move into home delivery proves as successful as trials

suggest.
At least the high level of debt incurred from the buy-back will chill Iceland's instincts to make a do-or-die acquisition like Littlewoods - gearing will rise to 130 per cent if the deal is

But it also puts the pursuit of a progressive dividend policy into cold storage. The increased interest bill means pre-tax profits are likely to fall on Nat West's estimates to £49.1m but the reduced number of shares in issue will enable earnings per share to advance 18.5 per cent to 15.2p, implying a prospective price-earnings ratio of less than seven and a yield of 6.8 per cent. On the face of it cheap, but no more

Telewest looks to mobile phones for expansion

Business Correspondent

Telewest, the UK's largest cable operator, is exploring ways of expanding its recently formed partnership with the £5bn merged cable group planned by Cable & Wireless into mobile telephony in a move which could cut across alliances in the

The discussions, which are understood to be at an early stage, are also thought to have taken place with all four mobile networks aimed at launching a mobile phone product which the two cable groups could market together as the distinction between fixed and mobile phones becomes increasingly blurred. The talks are sensitive: C&W

already partners one of Telewest's main shareholders, the American phone group US West, in One 2 One, the fourthlargest mobile company

C&W has already pledged to include mobile telephony in its new cable company, C&W Communications (CWC), formed out of the merger of its Mercury subsidiary with two cable operators, Nynex Ca-bleComms and Bell Cablemedia. So far C&W has kept investors guessing about whether One 2 One would be brought into the company. However the latest talks suggest both CWC and Telewest may choose to work with a rival mobile company instead, with the possibility that Orange may emerge as the preferred candidate. A source close to the two partners explained: "It has to be the best product. One 2 One would have to demonstrate that

it fulfils that role." The collaboration between Telewest and CWC already involves a digital cable television service, due to be launched towards the end of this year. They have already leapfrogged plans by BSkyB for a digital satellite channel by announcing the first firm hardware contract



Sticking together: Stephen Davidson is looking for a more coherent approach he believes was previously lacking

BP productivity drive ahead of target

profitability faster than expected, following the group's 30 per cent increase in profits and dividends last year. John Browne, chief

executive, said last year's target to improve underlying earnings by \$1.5bn (£940m) by the end of the decade would be achieved.

a year earlier than originally planned.

He said: "We now believe we can deliver at least another \$300m

of improvement this year." Mr Browne also pledged to speed up growth of BP's oil production, which could reach 2.5 million barrels

of oil and gas a day within the next decade, a rise of a million

Amouncing the discovery of two major new fields, off

Australia and Angola, he said the plan to raise production by 5 per cent a year to 2000 would continue for a full decade. He also

said that BP would invest \$5.6bn this year, mostly on exploration

In the next step in its programme to reform the gifts market, the Government announced yesterday that it will move to a programme of auctions for index-linked gifts as soon as feasible. It will also aim to increase the share of index-linked gifts in the total issued to a fifth, up from 15 per cent. Angela Knight, Economic Secretary to the Treasury, said the move represented a "further retary to the Treasury, said the move represented a "further treasury."

improvement in the transparency of the borrowing programme", following on the development of the gilt repo market and the gilt

The Bank of England will start consultations on the index-linked

gilt auction programme later this year, when there will be exidence from the US experiment in issuing index-linked Treasure

bonds as to how it might work. The Government's financing requirement – redemptions plus the expected public sector borrowing requirement – will be just under £40bn in 1997/98, of which National Savings will contribute around £3bn and gilt sales

Nursing Home Properties launched a £100m asset-backed bond

offering, securitising its property leases. The company said the issue will be made through Care Homes No1 subsidiary. Care Homes' portfolio consists of leases on 39 nursing and residential homes. The homes were leased to 11 different care opera-

tors, it said. NatWest Markets structured and arranged the offering, and is sole lead manager to the issue, which is for a term of 24

Auctions planned for index-linked gifts

make the set-top boxes which will enable viewers to access more than 100 channels.

Stephen Davidson, Telewest's chief executive, declined to give with building the network. details of the latest exploratory talks, but said: "We are looking at a raft of individual matters on which it makes sense to co-operate. It provides a platform for a more cohesive approach which has sometimes been lacking in the cable industry in the

Telewest yesterday revealed

barrels a day from current levels.

strips market due to start in the autumn.

Nursing Home issues bond

and production.

with a US electronics group to last year to £290.3m and disclosed that it broke even for the first time in 1996 before including the heavy depreciation and interest costs associated.

Investment during 1996 was £515.6m, taking the total out-lay so far to £1.7bn with 65 per cent of the network built. Mr Davidson predicted Telewest would spend a similar amount this year.

The extra spending pushed overall pre-tax losses to £249.9m, compared with a 52 per cent rise in revenues £114.7m in 1995.

to lose £18m' if duty-free ends

Nigel Cope City Correspondent

The duty-free industry continued its fight for survival vesterday with a new report claiming that the abolition of duty-free shopping in the European Union would reduce UK tax revenues, not increase them.

The report, which was commissioned by the Duty Free Shopping Confederation. claimed that if the planned abolition of duty-free shopping went ahead in 1999 it would cost the UK government £18m a year in lost tax revenue.

It said only 15-25 per cent of current expenditure on tax-free liquor and tobacco would continue after the abolition. yielding annual duty and VAT returns of £120m to the Exchequer.

But against that the report said tax returns would be hit by lower corporation tax from the UK drinks and tobacco industry whose profits would be hit. There would also be an impact from lower income tax and national insurance contributions from the jobs it claims would be lost.

Guinness estimates that up to 700 jobs could be lost in the Scotch whisky industry alone. The report said the end of the industry would encourage consumers to switch from products

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with a high UK-manufactured content, such as Scotch, to goods with lower UK content. It also predicted that duty-paid sales would switch from the UK to other EU countries where duty rates are lower.

Lord Rees, chairman of the Duty Free Confederation and a former chief secretary to the Treasury, said: "This study shows that duty-free and taxfree shopping is hardly a burden to the taxpayer. We hope the Government will look at the duty-free issue afresh in the light of the findings of the study."

This seemed unlikely yesterday judging by the response from the Customs & Excise department: "We will look at the report but the Government's position remains the same. There will be a transitional period for duty-free shopping which started in 1993 and will run until 1999. After that, it will end."

Though the duty-free shop-ping industry is fighting its corner, most insiders admit it is a lost cause. Unless overturned, duty and tax-free shopping will be abolished for passengers travelling between EU countries from 30 June 1999.

The industry is worth £1bn a year in the UK and £4bn across the EU. It is estimated 30 million consumers take advantage of duty-free each year in the UK.

Exchequer 'set | BAT eyes life insurance targets

Magnus Grimond

BAT Industries has considered buying the life insurance companies National Provident Institution, National Mutual Life or Scottish Equitable to beef up its provision of financial services products to independent financial advisers (IFAs).

The company identified the three groups last year as part of plans to shore up its main Ea-gle Star brand in the pensions market. But the tobacco to insurance giant is understood to have later cooled to this acquisition-led policy after market research showed IFAs were keener to deal with investment managers than life offices. The group has also been put off by the high value of around £2bn currently being put upon Scottish Amicable by competing offers for the mutual insurance group.

The three target groups are named in a strategic review drafted by BAT in the run-up to the launch last July of British American Financial Services. the umbrella under which the insurance to fund management operations are now grouped. That saw BAT, headed by Martin Broughton, the chief executive, unveil plans to use its Threadneedle fund manage-ment operation to spearhead its

attack on the IFA market. The first retail funds under the Threadneedle name are due to be launched in the third quarter, with a range of unit trusts.

Michael Prideaux, head of public affairs at BAT said he could not comment on information that had been "improperly obtained". He went on: "British American Financial Services has IFA sector is the fastest growing part of the market, where we are under-represented. We have got some quite interesting plans for dealing with that. Whether an acquisition forms part of that or not remains to be seen."



Martin Broughton: Aiming to

The risks of overpaying in that area were readily apparent, he said. They remained interested in a building society he added, "but it is not worth paying a great price to get into the business. You can end up getting big-ger, but not necessarily better."

Late last year it was reported that BAT had been in talks to merge its Eagle Star and Allied Dunbar insurance operations with Commercial Union as a prelude to demerging the financial services business. Those talks appear to have come to nothing, but many in the City believe BAT may still be on the look out for an acquisition to give critical mass to BAFS, prior to spinning it off. Splitting the group in two is seen as a way of dealing with the growing clamour for the tobacco side to settle the long-running court battles over smoking-

ambitions in the IFA sector, there is no secret about that. The shore up Eagle Star brand

ICL turnaround 'disappointing'

Chris Godsmark **Business Correspondent**

terday admitted the scale of its financial turnaround since the sale of its manufacturing operations last year had been dis-appointing. Keith Todd, ICLs chief executive, also reaffirmed his commitment to float the company on the stock market The results followed ICL's

ICL, the computer giant, yes-

A five-point plan to boost

profitability included selling the manufacturing business, D2D, to a Canadian company and shifting ICLs focus towards consultancy and service activities. The upheaval was softened by a rights issue raising £200m. Yesterday Mr Todd said the transformation of ICL was complete but argued the revenues

der the 90 per cent ownership of Japanese electronics giant tracts would not appear in vol-ume until 1998-99. A £1bn contract with the Post Office to ceptional charge. Excluding this, introduce electronic social security benefits payments would net an estimated £200m in additional revenues. ICL's sales last year shrank by

almost £200m to £2.92bn, reflecting the sale of businesses Losses before tax dropped sharply from £188.3m in 1995 to £2.5m. However the improvement came largely because the streams from large new con-

process was concentrated on the 1995 results, with a £151.5m exyear by £6.7m to £25.2m. Mr Todd said profit margins were still just 1 per cent, compared with the group's internal target

of 6 per cent. The results came as Mr Todo outlined a bold new vision for ICL in partnership with Fujit-su to market an Internet-based product which would link com-

impact of the restructuring puter users around the world. Company Results

New businesses set to boost jobs Start-up businesses are planning to create more jobs during the next two years, according to a survey from Barclays Bank. It also forecast that the number of small business start-ups will rise 5 per cent to 470,000 this year. Business confidence is rising, with 56 per cent of the start-up companies surveyed saying they expect their turnover to rise. The most buoyant sector is business services, especially computer services, marketing and Nomura's president pressured to resign Japan's Ministry of Finance put more pressure of the president of Nomura Securities to resign over last week's revelations of suspected illegal payments made by two of the broking house's directors to a racketeer. A senior ministry official said that even is tridge Schemaki. Nomura's president did not be made the directors to a racketeer. A senior ministry official said that even if Hideo Sakamaki, Nomura's president, did not know about the deals, top management must take responsibility for a lack of supervision of the company's business. He also said the ministry had told Mr Sakamaki that Nomura must work out a programme to avoid a recurrence of such scandals.

Wray to stand down from Carlton Carlton Communications said Nigel Wray would stand down as a non-executive director at the end of the month, due to the additional business responsibilities that he has recently taken a Mr Wray, who has been a non-executive director of the company since 1986, was involved in the recent takeover of Nottingham Forest football club.

Publisher plays down bid talk

latest bout of restructuring un-

Magnus Grimond

Midland Independent Newspapers, publisher of the *Birmingh* Post, yesterday played down the bid rumours which have buoyed the company's share price recently, saying it had not received any serious approaches. Chris Oakley, the chief ex-

ecutive, described the sugges-tions as just speculation. "I read it with interest. We have not had bids from anybody."

The shares, which have only briefly risen above their 140p offer price in 1992, have been a strong market of late on hopes of a bid from Mirror Group, part owners of The

They were up another 5p to 155p yesterday after the group

unveiled a 5 per cent rise in underlying profits to £16.6m.

Mr Oakley suggested much of
the speculation had come from
the group's Live cable television
joint venture in Birmingham with Mirror Group. Midland revealed it had lost £327,000 on its share of the operation last year, taking its total investment so far to £487,000. But Mr Oakley claimed the station's

local news was now more pop-ular than rivals CNN, Sky News and MTV, and said it was on target to make profits by 1999. In newspapers, a poor per-formance in the first half which led to a profits warning in June was almost reversed in the second six months, leaving op-erating profits from the division

Mr Oakley credited the turnaround on the sale of underperforming titles in Nottingham and Leicester, the acquisition of 10 weekly titles in the surroundings of Birmingham and better market conditions. Newsprint, which had soared to £550 a tonne, ended the year nearly £100 lower, while advertising had picked up as the year wore on, he suggested. The group figures were flat-

tered by the inclusion of the first full year of Inside Communications, the magazine publisher acquired midway through 1995, which saw its contribution grow from £1.3m to £3.6m.

The total dividend rises 8 per down just £516,000 at £16.9m. cent to 3.8p, including a final payment of 2.5p.

	vompa	ny wear	113	
·	Turnover £	Pro-tax £	. EPS	Olvidend
August Group (F)	-(1)	6.67m (13.6m)	8.2p (19p)	- (-) :
Charles Baynes (F)	251m (203m)	- 22.5m (17.7m)	8.29p (6.95p)	2.9p (2.5p)
Billiam (P)	6.81m (6.85m)	0.04m (-0.15m)	1.7p (-6.4p)	5.3p (5.3p)
Great intel (F)	149m (143m)	10.2m (3.5m)	91p (1.7p)	3.2p (2p)
Church & Co (F)	79.7m (78.4m)	5.4m (4.6m)	31.7p (27p)	15.750 (14.50)
Heywood Williams (F)	636m (582m)	39m (29m),	22.9p (17.9p)	13.8p (13.8p)
iceland (F)	1.42bn (1.37bn)	58.2m (72.6m)	13.15p (17.01p)	5.4p (5.25p)
lastes (F)	23.0m (21.3m)	1.32m (1.24m)	18.8p (18.1p)	4.5p (3.8p)
Maleye Group (F)	353m (315m)	2.5m (2.09m)	1p (0.96p)	0.660 (0.68p)
John Hammiers Grp (1)	37.3m (34 0m)	3.1et (2.53m)	8.29p (6.75p)	2.6p (Z.45p)
Middand Ind News (F)	94.4m (79.3m)	16.8m (19.1m)	8.08p (7.3p)	3.8p (3.5p)
Raed Elsevier (F)	3,38bn (3,21ba)	806m (736m)	152.2p (49.1p)	127.2p (24.5p)
Residitif kulttet (F)	2.3tm (875m)	. 318m (215m)	17.13p (14.22p)	5.06p (4.2p)
Schreders (F)	- (-)	239 m (187m)	91.9p (71.5p)	25p (18p)
Televest Cours (F)	290m (145m)	-0.25m (-0.11m)	- (-10.5p)	- (-)
TI Gardeap (F)	1,75bn (1.70on)	232m (185m)	34.1p (25,5p)	14.5p (18.1p)
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هكذا من الأصل

Warburg's reputation could be badly dented

تعكدًا من الأصل

Poor old SBC Warburg. On the day it announces bumper profits it is also hit by news of a Securities and Futures and Futures and Futures on the state of the old "contracts for differences" row here. The broader point of principles of the old "contracts for differences" row here. The broader point of principles of the old "contracts for differences" row here. Authority investigation of its handling of a £300m programme trade. This is not another incident of "rogue trading", nor did it involve Warburg's in any significant monetary loss. But the loss to reputation could be equally significant, for what Warburg's stands accused of, rightly or wrongly, is delib-erately trying to disadvantage a client in an area of business - big programme trades --where it is one of the City's market leaders.

The episode bears some repeating. Every week Warburg's executes anything up to 30 big programme trades, where big lines of stock are bought and traded out to the market, and it bids for a lot more. Last October it won the contract to sell off about £300m of shares which were being disposed of as part of the liquidation of the Kleinwort Benson European Privatisation Trust (Kepit). Clients generally accept that the bank be allowed to hedge its position ahead of executing the trade. On this occasion, however, the hedging was so obvious that it alerted to the market to what was about to happen. Foul, yelled Kepir's financial advisers Merrill Lynch, which accused Warburg's of deliberately smashing the prices down to its own advantage. Whether this was actually a case of premeditated price manipulation,

ciple is whether securities houses should be allowed hedge their positions at all ahead of such large scale transactions.

In time honoured fashion, Warburg's has moved to pre-empt whatever the SFA may do or say. Two traders have gone and the client, though not compensated, was eventually given the sort of favourable prices he might have expected all along.

In other words, everyone's happy. Or are they? The statement accompanying Warburg's results yesterday refers in terms to the bank's "active involvement in block trading. utilising our capital strength and distribution capability in service of our clients". What-ever the SFA's eventual findings on the Kepit incident, Warburg cannot emerge well. Whichever way you read it, no client is going to do business with a company it believes might disadvantage its interests.

The fact that this happens the whole time

in markets, that practice of this sort is endemic among securities firms, doesn't really lessen the damage. Many people are going to look at the bumper profits and bonuses now being earnt in the City and think "now we know why".

a case of premeditated price manipulation, or whether it is capable of a more generous interpretation, remains to be seen. This is one of the key questions the SFA is attemptions? It is only a slight exaggeration

to say that ICL has had more upheavals than British Leyland, British Steel, British Shipbuilding and all the other corporate rescue cases put together.

"ICL now has no factories left," the latest man in the hot seat. Keith Todd proudly announced yesterday as he outlined yet another new dawn as a services, software and consulting organisation. This is a far cry from the 1960s when the UK's entire computer manufacturing capacity was pushed into a merger under the ambitious title of International Computers Limited by the then minister for technology, Tony Benn. For the fol-lowing two decades ICL became the very embodiment of the British disease - weak directionless management, poor marketing, underinvestment and tangential technology and product.

The takeover by Fujitsu in 1990 was sup-posed to change all this, giving ICL the long-term commitment it had so obviously lacked in the past. But the reality has been more of the same traditional British fudge. Sir Peter Bonfield managed to generate a reputation as the company's saviour. Yet just months after he went off to run British Telecom ICL was in the throws of another huge internal restructuring drive.

Selling off the hardware business, the latest big idea, has so far done little to answer the basic question: just what is ICL meant to be about? Mr Todd clearly has grand hopes for the Internet revolution. "We intend to be a leader in the new world," he

says. Well possibly, but is ICL really any better placed to succeed in this brave new world than its many up and coming rivals. The restructuring last year has done nothing to boost ICLs profitability.

For ICL, that long sought after stock market float is always three years away. Yes, there would be a stock market quote before the turn of the century, Mr Todd

The last time ICL said there was a three year time horizon on its float was - er about three years ago. The odds are that Mr Todd, or his successor, will still be vainly waiting well into the next millennium.

In two years time the dastardly bureaucrats in Brussels plan to do away with one of the few remaining pleasures available to red-blooded, red-skinned Englishmen - their inalienable right to stock up with duty-free booze and fags on the way back home from holiday in some sun-drenched continental

Not suprisingly, the Duty Free Confedcration, a motley crew of airport, ferry and airline operators, drinks companies and duty-free shops, are not very keen on the idea. Now they have hired their own consultants, National Economic Research Associates, sent them away with their spread sheets and economic impact models and come up with the startling finding that the abolition of duty free, far from boosting Government receipts, will result | ellers in this way?

in a net loss to the Exchequer of £18m a

According to the research, the increased duty and tax yielded through abolition will be more than offset by lower corporation and income taxes as travellers after their spending habits, retailers lose sales and employees lose their jobs. Abolishing perks is never popular. But duty free is a perk available only to the overseas traveller and a perk, moreover, directed mainly at the Brits - we account for a quarter of all dutyfree sales a year.

If the Duty Free Confederation is concerned about loss of tax revenues and jobs then it would be far better employed campaigning for a lowering of duty paid. The duty on a pint of beer is five-times higher here than in France. Correcting that imbalance to a modest extent would boost sales, preserve jobs and, at a pinch, might even be tax positive, quite apart from reducing the temptation to go booze cruising across the Channel.

The trouble is that the Duty Free Confederation will never lobby for such a tax harmonisation because it is not in the interests of its members who benefit massively and disproportionately from the current dutyfree arrangements, The Duty Free Conferation will continue to bang the drum right up to 30 June 1999 but it should be resisted. Why should other taxpayers continue to subsidise the fares of European air and sea trav-

Relief for industry as pound takes a knock

Diane Coyle **Economics Editor**

There was relief for manufacturers yesterday as sterling dived more than three pfennies against the mark to its lowest level since early February. The drop followed remarks by Howard Davies, Deputy Governor of the Bank of England, who said financial markets were expecting a fall in the pound.

New figures yesterday showed that the slow recovery in manufacturing continued in January with no sign the strong pound had hit output anyway.



Eddie George, Governor of the Bank of England, said in a speech last night that sterling posed a dilemma over interest rates, but he repeated the Bank's view that a "moderate" rise was needed to slow domestic demand.

Manufacturing output expanded by 0.3 per cent in January, taking its annual growth up to 1.6 per cent. Output is now rising at the fastest rate for more than a year. Total industrial output, which

also includes electricity, gas and water, North Sea production and mining, was flat. But its yearwin chimbed to 24 p cent. The sectors which rely most on exports - engineering. cars and chemicals - showed no signs of exchange rate damage.

These numbers show little evidence at this stage that the stronger pound has hit the export competitiveness of British industry," said Edmund Nonis, an economist at Nikko. Martin Brookes at Goldman

Sachs said surveys pointed to another jump in manufacturing output last month. "Strong domestic demand has had an offsetting effect," he said. Recent surveys have, however,



Going down: Howard Davies, of the Bank of England, said markets were indicating a future decline in sterling's value

the fact that exporters have reduced their prices in a bid to overcome the impact of the strong pound. The Purchasing Managers' Index showed export orders barely increasing, leading some City experts to predict that manufacturing industry will

remain fragile. The Office for National Statistics had revised down output growth at the end of last year. The full year's increase in industrial production was reper cent, but the increase in the fourth quarter was revised down from 0.9 per cent to 0.6 per cent. day's close of DM2.7377.

pointed to a slowdown in the "That might be enough to take growth of export orders despite the estimate of GDP growth ast above trend to it from trend level," said John O'Sullivan at NatWest Markets.

The size of the quarterly rise in GDP has been one of the decisive factors for interest rates. Revised figures for the fourth quarter are due before Kenneth Clarke and Mr George are due to hold what could be their last monetary meeting on 10 April. Mr Clarke has also used the

strength of sterling to justify turning down the Bank's advice vised up by 0.1 per cent to 1.2 to raise interest rates. The pound ended at DM2.7134, compared with the previous

Rentokil barely delivers on 20 per cent growth promise

Clifford German

Sir Clive Thompson, chief executive of the fast-growing Rentokil Initial industrial services group, has only just managed to keep his promise of delivering 20 per cent annual earnings growth. The company's latest results, released yesterday, showed that earnings per share advanced by 20.5 per cent last year, but only with the aid of the takeover of arch-rival BET

Profits in the businesses rose by only 9 per cent in 1996, which Sir Clive attributed to the costs of integrating the two compa-nies and unquantified costs of business lost and savings missed through management's time being diverted to the process of integrating BET.

However, he admitted that even without these distractions that earnings growth would have fallen short of the 20 per where between 17 and 19 per

Turnover in the enlarged business rose from £874m to £2.4bn, but profits before tax grew by a more sedate 48 per cent to £318m - which is a re-flection of the lower operating margins at BET's businesses. The net dividend goes up in line with earnings to 5.06p.

The existing Rentokil operations increased turnover by 15 per cent to £1.01bn and profits by just 9 per cent to £233m.

Group pre-tax profits were in line with expectations and the BET businesses did better than expected, but the poor performance of the original businesses sent the shares down 2.5p to 415.5p.

BET's profit contribution was £84.6m in eight months after charging £31m of interest on the cash element of the cost of buying the company. Its tion made little difference to the cent promise - being some- profit margins edged up from spread of business, although the



of integration hit profits

8.2 to 8.7 per cent. The actual costs of the integration process are included in exceptional costs of £16.4m, which also cover the effect of the stronger

Geographically the acquisi-

contributions from North America increased slightly. By sector, hygiene and cleaning re-mained the biggest single division generating close to 40 per cent of profits from 30 per cent of group turnover. The acquisition of BET improved the contribution from plant and distribution and personnel services at the expense of pest control, the original core of the Rentokil business 25 years ago. Turnover and profits in that department showed little change last year and it now contributes 20 per cent of profits but less than 10 per cent of turnover.

On prospects, the company is adamant that the setback in the original businesses is temporary and the group is back on course to rebuild margins in the ongoing business and to make further improvements in the BET businesses and to deliver a 20 per cent improvement in earnings in 1997.

Media groups reduce BSkyB stakeholding

Patrick Tooher

Three media groups - Granada, Pearson and Pathé of France yesterday sold a 1.1 per cent stake in BSkyB, reducing their holding in the satellite operator to 12.8 per cent.
BSB Holdings, the vehicle

for the BSkyB stake, said it had no intention of selling any more BSkyB shares and that Granada, Pearson and Pathé would not sell any more shares for 60 days. "It's just a tidying up exercise," said a spokesman for BSBH.

But analysts insisted the move cleared the way for Pearson, which is busy shuffling its television interests since the arrival of new chief executive BSBH, compared with a current Majorie Scardino this year, to

make a final exit from BSkyB. The three media companies plan to use the tax benefits from the sale to buy the 6 per cent of BSBH they do not already own.

The sale price was not dis-closed, though the 19.5 million shares sold to BZW for placing with institutional investors would be worth just over £123m at BSkyB's closing share price of 632p, down 1p. The biggest beneficiary from

the proposed restructuring will be London Merchant Securities, the property and investment group. LMS said the plans would result in it realising not less than £62m in the summer for its entire investment in book value of £8.1m.

Other shareholders in BSBH, including Lord Hollick's United News & Media will receive about £4m from the deal. Following the sale, BSBH will own 220.6 million shares in BSkyB, representing about 12.8

Pearson sold its 9.75 per cent stake in BSkyB almost two years ago, but still retains an indirect holding of 4.3 per cent through BSBH worth £467m. Analysts said that having re-solved the problem of minority

shareholders in BSBH, Pearson now had to find a way of avoiding a massive capital gains tax bill which would be incurred from selling the rest of its BSkyB stake. In 1995 the High Court dismissed a £170m claim by LMS



Gerry Robinson: Will not sell more shares for 60 days

against four shareholders in the former British Satellite Broadcasting group over the terms of its merger with Rupert Mur-doch's Sky group to form BSkyB. LMS had claimed the merger terms were unfair to minority shareholders. BSkyB is now 40 per cent owned by Mr Murdoch's News Corporation. Gerry Robinson's Granada and Pathé also hold direct stakes.



Wine drinkers toast HK budget

Stephen Vines Hong Kong

> If there is one absolutely clear message which emerges from yesterday's Hong Kong budget it is, let them drink wine. Donald Tsang, the colony's financial secretary, revealed that the govcrament coffers were seriously awash with cash but he was proposing to give little away except to wine drinkers who will benefit from a cut in duty from

90 to 60 per cent. The generosity being shown to wine chickers is bizatre as few Hong Kong people drink wine, with the possible exception of the financial secretary, and the

people who apparently bug him at dinner parties with concerns over high wine duties. Mr Tsang said this was the "one issue which has plagued me more than most". That will be news to the many

social welfare organisations who fail to understand why a revenue surplus of HK\$15-1bn (£1.2bn) could not have been distributed more generously in their direction. Huang Chen-ya, the economics spokesman for the Democratic Party, said the budget meant that the rich would be able "to drink red wine but the poor will not have enough money for their very living".

than nine times higher than the forecast amount of HK\$1.6bn, mainly because soaring property prices and a buoyant stock market have yielded far higher-thanexpected revenues from stamp duty. Government land sales also made a higher-than-anticipated contribution while capital spending failed to ma-

terialise at expected levels. The net result of the growing surplus and accumulation of government reserves means the Hong Kong government will have total reserves of some HK\$359bn (£29bn) to hand over to the incoming Chinese administration which assumes The budget surplus was more power in July.

This is an infinitely greater sum than was ever expected. A Sino-British agreement signed in 1991 required the departing colonial government to ensure that just HK\$25bn was left in the reserves to be bequeathed to the incoming administration. Mr Tsang has revealed that this amount will be exceeded by more than 14

Little wonder therefore that Chinese officials fully endorsed the last budget delivered under British sovereignty and the first devised in consultation with China, although Mr Tsang denied that China changed any of the plans laid in Hong Kong.



market report/shares

FTSE 100 -21.8 4422.5 Cadbury Schweppes fizzed to a 12-month high as worries the FTSE 250 4725.1 soft drinks and sweets group FTSE 350 was suffering a mauling in the US continued to fade. 2185.4 **SEAQ VOLUME** 929.1m shares, 56,306 bargains Gilts Index Share spotlight were down to 468.5p ahead of

Cadbury on a high as fears of US mauling evaporate

Last week's figures and ro-

bust presentation has prompt-ed many to revise their view that the British giant is being squeezed unmercifully by the combined might of Coca-Cola and PepsiCo in the fiercely competitive American drinks market. The shares rose 14.5p to 555p in busy trading, only 6p below their all-time high. They

Although there is a widespread suspicion Cadbury's could be tempted into another big swallow, perhaps around the £2bn mark, the stock mar-

The Cadbury share rush has also been helped by the inevitable takeover speculation. With a near-£5.5bn capitalisation there are not many possito be on the take-over trail, and Swiss giant Néstle could, however, feature in any action.

Enterprise Oil flared 11.5p to 633.5p ahead of what are exnected to be exciting results today which should confirm that the disasters of the abortive Lasmo takeover bid are firmly behind it. But Enterprise, with an un-

usually long round of analyst

meetings scheduled, could be

flexing its muscles for a return to the bid arena. The market is awash with ruto use its cash pile for expansion. British Borneo Petroleum

MARKET REPORT DEREK PAIN

porting FTSE 250 index rose 3.5p to 719.5p. from Enterprise was there was no chance of a bid accompa-

stock market reporter of the year

Argos, the catalogue retail-er, was the only casualty, as it lost its place to British Land. nying today's figures.

BSkyB shaded to 632p as BZW placed 19.5 million shares with institutions at 628p. There was no celebration at British Land, off 9p at 546.5p; Argos fell 5p to 664p. Footsie's six-day winning run came to an abrupt end. The The deal will allow smaller shareholders in the satellite television group, such as Next, to realise their stakes. Grana-

da, Pathe and Pearson, with index suffered a 21.8-points fall to 4,422.5 and the supporting index also lost ground, off 4.3 around 12.7 per cent through a vehicle called BSB, say they at 4,725.1. A raft of less than

476.5p; the price has frothed up from 426p last month. The spirit to stout group is due to present year's figures next. week; a modest 2 per cent in-crease to around £955m is ex-pected with the group a

and sluggish whisky markets. There are suggestions that chairman Tony Greener is thinking in terms of doing the splits - dividing the group into stand-alone beer and spirit companies. Such a demerger, it is argued, would increase shareholder value. The two other leading British spirit groups, Allied Domecq and Grand Metropolitan, have already rejected similar de-

lower at 702.5p but Cookson's newed talk of more disc deals, rose 16p to 230.5p and Amstrad, the Alan Sugar electronics vehicle was little changed at 203.5p despite talk

tal television deals.

JKX On & Gas, where Sir.

Robert Horton (ex-BP) is chairman, fell 9p to 34.5p, perilously close to its 34p rights. ssue price. The shares were 225p two years ago. Scotia, the drugs group, re-

mained under pressure fol-lowing its diabetic drug setback falling a further 30p to 405p. But Shield Diagnostic's rampant progress continued, up another 62.5p to 717.5p. Iceland's share buyback overcame a disappointing 23

siness

ency, jumped 8.5p to 18p, but touched 120p three years ago. The excitement stems from plans to reorganise its

group run by Adam Page, is riding near its high at 122.5p amid hopes of further expan sion moves. Mr Page created the old Midsum

group, has moved into oil trading through a 25.2m ness. The shares are



685 626 634 683 797 739 886 546 726 726 778

Fair exchange is no robbery – it could be a new source of work

Dundits sitting in their offices surrounded by nology will be. The most aulikely, in Club class on a plane with their laptop open and a glass of champagne to hand, tend to focus on the glamorous aspects of our

changing economy.

It is communications gizmos, the highly profitable entertainment industries, the opportunities for ultra-educated and internationally mobile professionals, the global capital flows, that attract all the at-

But these form only one aspect of the fundamental changes that are taking place. and the one that is probably of least interest to most people. What they care about is where the jobs will be and how they will make a living. The majority is unfamiliar with the delights of business

There has been a vogue for dire predictions of future social immoil and upheaval as global capitalism puts increasing numbers out of work. The latest to fall victim to this fashion was none other than the ultra-capitalist George Soros writing in the US magazine the Atlantic Monthly.

The lesson of history is that this fashionable gloom is nonsense. In the 18th Century the Physiocrats, a group of French political economists, predicted disaster as manufacturing took over from agri-

culture. They argued that only agriculture was productive because seed generated a whole lot of new corn, whereas manufacturing was sterile because it merely involved the processing of materials. The doomsters who see disaster in the current economic trends will come to seem just as sil-

ly as the Physiocrats. My assertion does, however, demand an answer to the question about where the jobs replacing all those disthoritative employment forecasts come from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics.

It sees two main sources of new work in future: the professional, high-flying kind; and "community, social and personal services". Many more people will be employed in this latter category, which covers a huge range of people-intensive services from teaching and nursing through security guards and cleaners to aromatherapists and personal trainers.

An important part of this expansion will turn out to be in what Americans call the "third sector" and Continentals the "social economy". This sector has rather fuzzy boundaries. It includes charities and churches but also organisations such as housing associations, which overlap with the public sector, and grassroots organisations such

as credit unions. One of the most promising avenues for the generation of jobs and income in the social economy takes the form of the local exchange trading system, or Lets. Essentially, a Lets scheme allows people in a given area to barter goods and services.

They can be seen as an extension of the social bartering that most of us participate in - looking after friends' children, running errands for somebody who is ill, in the knowledge that the neigh-bourliness will be repaid if

Many of the formal schemes in this country consist of a computer bulletin board, describing the offers or requirements to trade, and an accounting system which records the transactions and keeps credits and debits up to date. The buyer and seller negotiate a price between them. The units of account are an alternative form of money -"anchors" in Greenwich.



Diane Coyle

The buyer and seller negotiate a price between them. The units of account are an alternative form of money - 'anchors' in

Greenwich, 'strouds' in the Gloucestershire town

"strouds" in the town of the same name in Gloucestershire. The US schemes are more likely to have a physical, printed alternative currency, such as "Ithaca Hours" in the town in upstate New York. A swift Internet search reveals a large number of schemes, most in the US and

Lets schemes started as a means of overcoming the constraints imposed by lack of money in a poor community or during a recession. The schemes reduce the need for

social network and sense of the US, estimates that transing part, often those like the long-term unemployed who have been steadily excluded by the conventional economy.

There is not much hope that conventional economic approaches will provide the solution for these pockets of urban exclusion. In many lowincome communities, the lita state payment of benefit, and it will often leave straight away by the payment of rent to landlords from outside the area, or buying food and other essentials from branches of national stores.

The Lets currency, by contrast, has to stay in the area. and starts to boost the local economy through an absolutely standard economic "multiplier" effect, whereby what one person earns is spent in turn on another nomic activity - the aim beservice.

Many Lets get some sup-port - usually advice and management - from local councils or voluntary agencies. The success record is mixed. A recent series of case studies of UK schemes concluded that there were two main obstacles. One was a combination of a lack of confidence and know-how on the part of the members, and a lack of support from the council or voluntary agencies. The other was the lack of trust - or absence of social capital - in areas such as problem estates with high

crime rates. However, despite these problems, the New Economics Foundation estimates that the UK has some 300 schemes 10 years after they were introduced. Some Lets have grown to impressive pro-portions. For example, one of the UK's biggest, in Man-chester, has 700 members and has created its own credit union.

Paul Glover, organiser of money and potentially offer a the Ithaca Hours scheme in

self-worth to the people tak- actions in the local currency, accepted in about 300 businesses, have reached a value equivalent to about \$1.5m. A time-dollar system in St Louis, Missouri, has about 3,000 participants earning and spending about 50,000 time-dollars. Ed Mayo of the New Economics Foundation argues that Lets do not reptle money that enters is often resent a second-class economy. Rather, they are a logical

development in a global

economy.

حكدًا من الأصل

"Lets should not create the impression of a dualistic structure of classical work versus local exchange. Instead they point towards mul-tiple ways of organising and rewarding work," he writes. "Localised approaches to work creation should be set within, rather than apart from, broader spheres of eco-

the third sector without an infusion of public funds. Indeed, a City economist, Stephen Lewis of London Bond Broking, believes the Internet will allow rapid expansion of schemes that involve the creation of electronic money, whether they are small-scale like Lets

rather than autarchy." Lets

offer one means of growing

or provided commercially. He says: "The extension of credit, in the form of a store of value, might initially gen-erate a deposit which might then be transferred to other users of the system in payment for goods and services."

One feature of our increasingly weightless economy - to use the telling adjective coined by Danny Quah at the London School of Economics - might well turn out to be the growth of local currencies tied to local

How long will it be before airlines would accept an alternative currency in pay-

Scardino starts to hunt away from the Forest

Albert Scardino, the American journalist whose bid for Nottingham Forest failed at the last minute, is still on the hunt for suitable deals. He is avoiding football for the time being and is looking at media opportunities instead. "I would like to do a deal with a media business either here or in the States. It could be newspapers, television or sport." Mr Scardino is look-

ing at deals up to £100m.
"I wish it could be in newspapers," he says. "But I'm not sure that is where the best opportunities are."

Mr Scardino is confident he can secure backing for his next move. However, he is unlikely to be troubling Mercury Asset Management after it walked away from the Forest deal just days before the crunch deadline.

Kogan Page, the publishing firm, is celebrating its 30th birthday this week. The firm was founded in 1967 by Philip Kogan and Terry Page with £2,000 borrowed from Mr Kogan's late brother. Though Mr Page left after just a few months, Mr Kogan stayed on and still runs the firm today at the age of 60. "I knew it had stopped being a game when our payroll topped

£1m," he said. Mr Kogan founded the company in his spare time while working at Commarket, the publishing group co-founded by Michael Hesel-tine. He built Kogan Page up to an £8m sales company

publishing 300 titles a year.

Now edging towards retirement, he is not sure what to do with the business. "I have had offers but quite like being independent. I have known a lot of my contemporaries sell out, often for a lot of money, but many of them wish they hadn't. And we don't have to answer to a bunch of suits from Amsterdam or New

Un-Cadbury-like goings-on at Rover, the car group. The chief executive, Dr Walter

PEOPLE & BUSINESS



Left in the lurch: Albert Scardino's Forest bid failed

man as well following an announcement yesterday. Current incumbent Dr Wolfgang Reitzle is stepping down.

"We have had situations before where we have comhined the roles of chairman and chief executive and it has worked well. It suits the BMW main board to have a hands-on executive chairman rather than a non-executive figurehead," a Rover spokesman says. But what about Cadbury? "We are part of a German company."

The Trocadero property group has appointed a new finance director. He is 39year-old Malcolm Gardner, the former finance director of People's Phone, the mobile phone group sold to Vodafone. He replaces Julian Gleek, who filled the role on a part-time basis following the group's demerger from Burford Holdings. As part of his remuneration package. Mr Gardner has been granted 1.2 million share options at 40p. Mr Gardner will have an interesting set of numbers to add up in his new role. Trocadero bought the rights to Enid Blyton's works last year. And Noddy pyjamas went on sale in Marks & Spencer yesterday for the first time.

The corporate banking team

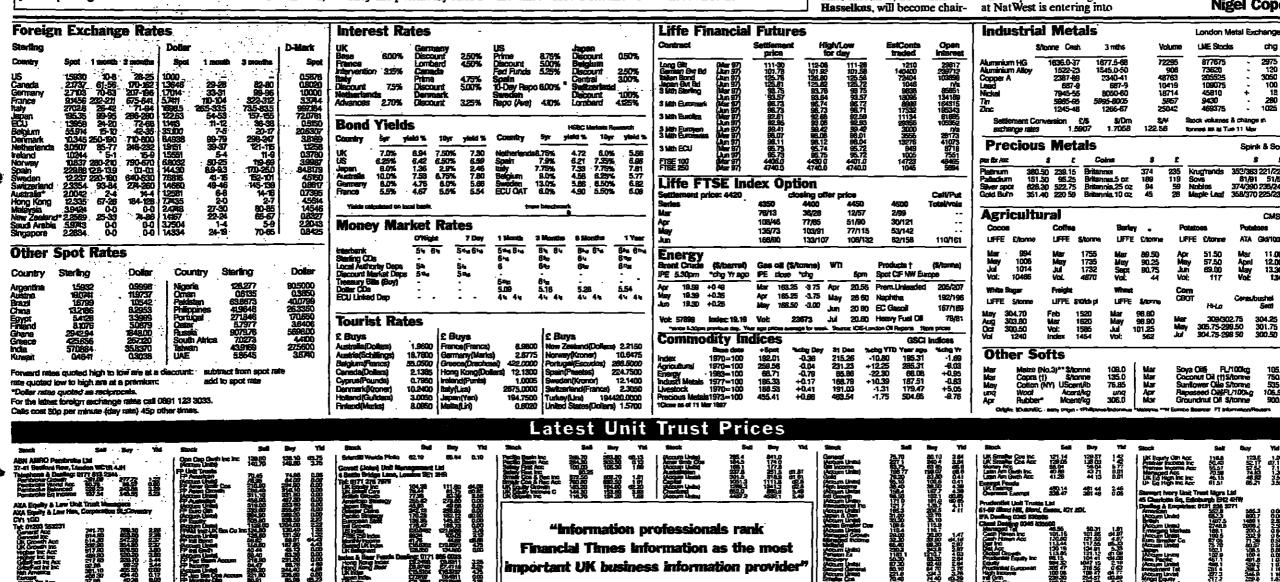
the spirit of Comic Relief Day iomorrow. Thirty execs including George Derbyshire. head of corporate banking, are taking part in a nine-hour sponsored row. The rowers will be overseen by Olympic gold medallist Steve Redgrave and will do their stints on a rowing machine in Nat West's lobby in Drapers Gardens. The goal is to row the equivalent length of the English channel from Dover to Calais, a distance of 67.2 kilo-

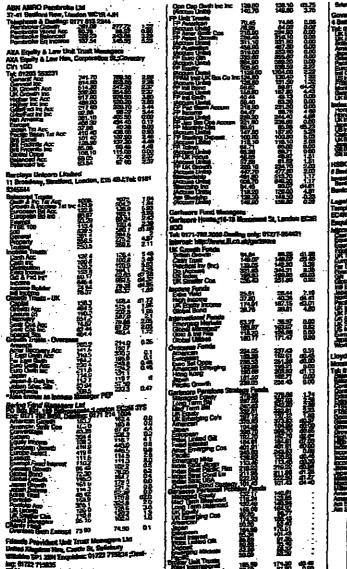
metres. Also donning a rowing singlet and Lycra stretch pants will be Chris Sullivan, managing director of the Lombard business finance

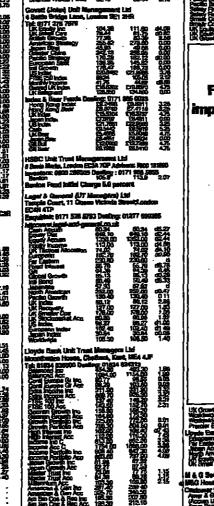
PG Tips is planning to make a splash next week for the launch of its pyramid teabags. The company has commissioned a performance artist, Ben Jones, to build more than 40 pyramids around London. The largest will measure more than 40 feet high and will pass along the River Thames under Tower Bridge.

PG Tips is also paying £50,000 for a state-of-the-art firework display which will be launched from a barge moored alongside the Oxo Tower restaurant near Black-

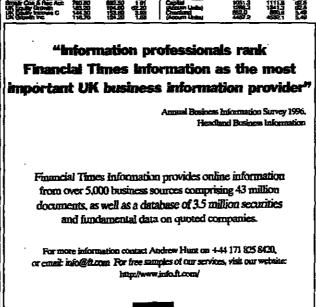
Nigel Cope





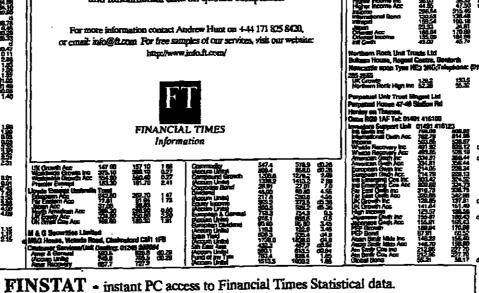


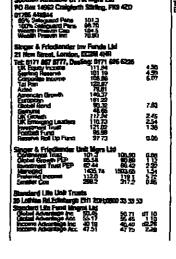
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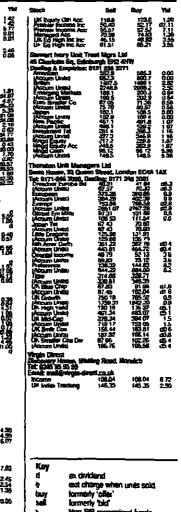


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tormerly 'offer' formerly 'bid' Non SIB recognised funds

Serious bettors are undemonstrative but insistent. They don't expect a strike every time but their boundless. a strike every time but their boundless optimism can be contagious

sprawling acres, distracted as right thinking people must be when surrounded by numerous bars and oases offering other forms of sustenance, racegoers rely on the ani-mal instinct of the horse player and find their unerring way to points of financial investment.

There they yield up their world-ly goods as though it is their intent to salve whatever wounds have been previously inflicted on the bookmaking fraternity and restore in a single afternoon the money spent on improving Cheltenham's

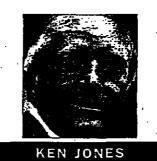
lev crew are undemonstrative but in-

Unfamiliar though many are with the geography of Prestbury Park's sistent. They don't expect a strike every time but their boundless optimism can be contagious. Getting around a lot makes them less susceptible than most to current influimmune to the scourge of misin-

A friend who falls into this category, giving a great deal of his leisure time to the quest for winners, warns against taking the advice of trainers and jockeys and placing a bet just for the sake of it. The daft thing, and there are always plenty of woeful anecdotes at Cheltenham to confirm a fairly common afflic-tion, is that he always has an ear The serious bettors in this mot-cocked for the grapevine. A confident whisper from one

quarter on Tuesday was that Erzad-jan, an Irish contender for the last race, The Hamlet Extra Mild Cigars Gold Card Handicap Hurdle (the names grow longer and longer) ferers. If pains were taken to make sure that this was not put about generally, it didn't matter because Erzadjan failed to figure in the placing.

Shortly before they went off in the first race yesterday, the Royal Sun Alliance Novice Hurdle, a case could be made for the Jimmy Fitzgerald trained Agistment, as noted by this paper's tipster, Hyperion, who was in cracking form with two winners already to his name including Make A Stand in the



Fortunately, my friend was on hand to advise caution, which only goes to show the sense in listening to people who know what they are

going and that the race was stitched on for the J P McManus-owned Istabraq, who brought in a considerable amount of late money. Brilliantly ridden by Charlie Swan, it turned out to be Ireland's first winner of the meeting.

This did not diminish my faith in

Hyperion, who tipped Firmsy Truth, the 33-1 winner of the National Hunt Chase, the race showed just how things can turn for or against you. Agistment, the winner of its ast three races, went at the first giving Richard Dunwoody a nasty

A traditional tendency of punters is to be fairly content with modest gains when they are winning but,

when losing to insist on betting more than they can afford in an effort to recoup. For bookmakers, this can be described as the hidden percentage as distinct from the ordinary percentage. As Istabraq was the first favourite to succeed in 31 races at Cheltenham, it can be imagined that bookmakers have great faith in this psychological ace

in the hole. A big issue is the state of the go-ing, which does not appear to be in accordance with the official de-scription. Apart from playing havoc with form, it is causing a great deal of consternation among trainers. For example, Gordon Richards eral Command - another of my los- can do.

day in the Astec Buzz Shops Hand-icap Chase and will miss the Grand National. A course that continues to produce records is not to Richards

liking.
- We shall have to wait and see whether the ground causes Michael Hourigan to withdraw Dorans Pride from today's Gold Cup, but un-questionably in view of the imponderables, it is an event to be approached with the utmost caution.

Incidentally, in the opinion of some respected veterans there could be a further endorsement of Martin Pipe's method in the performance of Challenger Du Luc. It may was exceedingly put out when Gen- all go to show what an idle rumour

No ifs or buts for 'lucky' Lamaison

ne of the mysteries of French rugby is how they seem to be able to produce a seemingly endless supply of top-class players who are able to slip at a moment's notice into the national side.

Take Christophe Lamaison for instance, who was arguably the dominant figure in France's surprise victory at Twickenham a fortnight ago. With only four caps to his credit, one of which was as a replacement against South Africa in Bordeaux last year, he is still waiting for the Federation Française de Rugby to measure him for a blazer.

But with his first ball at Twickenham, he had the gall to stand up and run around Will Carling (with 70 caps to his name) and then go on to score 18 points, made up of a full house of a try, field goal, two penalties and two conversions. Not to mention his delicate chip kick which bounced perfectly into the arms of his winger. Laurent Leflamand, for France's first try.

So who, one might ask, is Christophe Lamaison? Originally from the small, south-west town of Peyrehorade near Dax. Lamaison, who usually answers to his Basque nickname of "Titou", joined the First Divi-sion club Bayonne as a 19year-old in 1990. Nevertheless, despite appearing once on the Blacks in 1995, a few months ago even in France Lamaison was almost unknown, a regular if slightly overweight performer for Bayonne, just another on the list of journeymen centres who

abound in French rugby. But a change of club in the off season - from Bayonne to Brive - and the unprecedented spate of injuries in the French camp - including both first-choice centres, Richard

lan Borthwick meets the novice centre closing on a Grand Slam

taignède – have brought about a rapid change in his fortunes. "A lot of people in Bayonne

were upset when I left, but I know I made the right choice," he says. "At 25 years old I knew I had to take my chance. Rugby in France was about to move into a new era, and I wanted to be part of it. The train was leaving and I was determined not to be left standing on the platform."

In the space of a few months, Lamaison was transformed. For a start, Brive's all-out search for professionalism and excellence meant that for the first time in his life Lamaison suddenly started training properly. Under the eye of the club's fitness expert, the athletics specialist Bernard Faure, Lamaison has picked up a yard of pace, and shed more than a stone in weight, replacing the flab with finely tuned muscle.

"Before coming to Brive I No 3 or 4." had never once litted weights. To be hor is an integral part of training for any high-level sportsman," Lamaison says. "Bernard's input is extraordinary. He is able to tell exactly what is lacking in vise a way of rectifying it."

In short, Lamaison has suddenly blossomed and, playing outside Alain Penaud for the irresistible Brive side in the Heineken Cup, developed more and more confidence in

his own ability.
It is this confidence, allied to an unfailing big-match tem-perament, which has enabled him to play with such aplomb as he showed at Twickenham, or earlier in Paris, when he scored

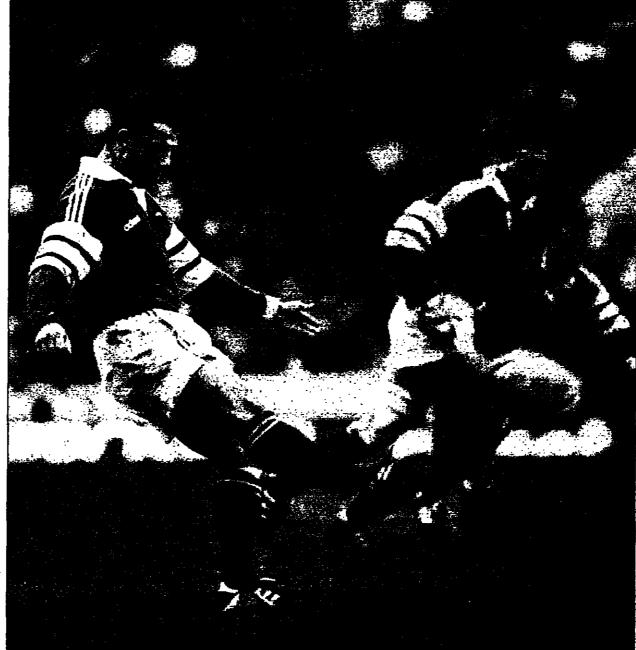
one try and played a key role in setting up two others in France's 27-22 defeat of Wales. Even the 47-11 thrashing handed out to Brive by the touring Auckland Blues has failed to unsettle him. "On the contrary, it has enable me to put things in per-spective. Now I have seen what top-level rugby is all about, and I know how much further

I still have to go," he says. "When you have played against 15 stone centres like the Aucklanders, coming up against someone like Carling is nothing to be afraid of."

Lamaison, like the other 'ringers" who have been obliged to cover for the injuries to Dourthe, Castaignède, Philippe Saint-André, Olivier Roumat and Philippe Benetton, approaches each game as if there is no tomorrow. "If the others were fit I probably wouldn't even get a place on the reserve bench. I know that everybody is waiting for the injured players to return, but I am just happy to live this experience to the full. It's up to me to work harder and harder at my game so that I can become the No 1 choice, not the

To be honest, his debut in the But I am now convinced that it French side was far from promising. He came on as a replacement centre against South Africa in the first Test in Bordeaux and the next week was picked as stand-off, reputedly er, with the idea of keeping the Springbok back line under pressure. Many of his kicks, however, were poorly judged, and Lamaison became one of the principal scapegoats for the defeat in Paris.

"Of course it hurts being criticised like that, especially in the press," he says. "But I have tried to make use of the criticism: I have been using it as a means of motivation for me to



Christophe Lamaison: 'Now there are upstarts like me on the verge of making history'

After winning the Heineken Cup in January, then overwhelming Wales and England. Lamaison now finds himself on the verge of a Grand Slam. "Life is like one big party at the moment!" he enthuses. And the irony of it all seems to appeal to him: "There are some great

years without getting near a Grand Slam. And now there are unstarts like me with only a couple of cans on the point of making history. It's daylight robbery, but I'm determined to make the

most of it while it lasts." His main preoccupation in

players who have gone for 10 the build-up to this Saturday's game against Scotland is to hold his concentration as he did at Twickenham, and not to let talk of the Grand Slam disrupt him from the match. "I know only one thing about this game and that is that it will be very very difficult," Lamaison says.

Photograph: Allsport

"The Scots are on a roll after their game against Ireland and we know they will come here Park. A Welsh Rugby Union with a lot of desire, generosity, and fire. If we can't compete with them in those aspects of the game, we'll never be able to dominate and play the way we

France call up **Aucagne**

Injuries have once again forced the French selectors to reshuffle their team for Saturday's Five Nations' Championship Grand Slam decider against Scotland at Parc des Princes.

France, who have been without several key players in all their matches so far in the tournament, have lost both their half-backs and one prop since beating England 23-20 at Twickenham two weeks ago.

The Pau stand-off, David Aucagne, takes over from the injured Alain Penand while Guy Accoceberry replaces Penaud's Brive team-mate Philippe Carbonnean at scrum-half in the side announced yesterday by Tean-Claude Skrela.

Penaud has a pulled thigh muscle while the first-choice No 9, Carbonneau, is recovering from a twisted ankle and will start as a substitute.

The Brive prop, Didier Casadei, wins his first cap in place of Christian Califano, who was automatically suspended after being sent off for punching an opponent in a league game at the weekend. "Casadei has proved that he had international class by helping Brive win the European Cup. Skrela said. "He's the same type of player as Califano and he should fit in without any problems."

Stewards at the National Stadium, will prevent souvenir hunters digging up pieces of the Nations match between Wales and England at Cardiff Arms spokesman said: "We are relling the stewards to be extra vigilant because there are still two important matches to be staged at the ground before it is rede-

ASM DOK

Muggeridge resumes attack

Joanne Muggeridge has made another attack on the England set-up after bowing out of the All-England championships at the National Indoor Arena in Birmingham yesterday. The Kent player lost 11-7,

11-4 in the second round to the

Japanese qualifier Kanako

Yonekura and afterwards claimed it had been "one of the worst experiences of her life". Already upset at having been thrown out of the England squad, Muggeridge said: I was there completely alone. There were five English coaches there

and no one was supporting me. "I have had no one cheering for me at all, not even when I

have done well, when I won yesterday [Tuesday]. That's pretty bad really.

Muggeridge, who had a let-ter from the Badminton Association of England relieving her of all England responsibilities after a dispute about her fitness, could not sustain her effort. She may have been mentally distracted by the enduring conflicts, which now look likely to go to the law courts, but she also appeared to have suspect stamina after a good start. There were flashes of out-

standing strokeplay, but she lost the last four rallies of the first game quickly, and a long rally at 4-8 in the second game appeared to wind her. "I don't think there's anything

wrong with my fitness but men-

tally it was extremely difficult. I had so many things going on

The England manager, Steve Baddeley, disagreed, saying: "She is a very talented player and watching her is always interesting. But we saw that over two games she wasn't able to maintain her level. That's why she has to improve her fitness." Earlier, Julie Bradbury, Eng-

in my head," she said."

land's most successful player over the past three years, saw her international comeback - after six months away from the world circuit - halted by injury to her doubles partner, Nick Ponting. Bradbury stormed off the court in frustration after Ponting quit with a stomach muscle problem during their second-round

Christie tipped to return

Athletics

Two of Linford Christie's training partners have opened the bidding in this year's "will Linford run?" campaign.

Christie kept the whole country guessing before deciding to defend his Olympic 100 metres title in Atlanta last summer. Now hurdler Tony Jarrett and sprinter Darren Braithwaite have aid they believe Christie will take part at the World Champi-

onships in Athens in August "I think he is still one of the best 100m runners in the world." Jarrett said. "He has often said he may well think about it, but his performances in Australia this winter and recently indoors, may have swung his decision."

Christie, now 36, hinted at a return to world athletics last week when he told BBC television that he was not sure

about retiring.
Braithwaite, too, believes Christie will be back. "I am almost certain he will return to the World Championships," he said. "He is running as quick as he ever has and there is no reason why he can't compete with the best.

"I do not think from speaking to him that he is ready to retire, and he has said to me he misses international competition. I think he realises he can still compete with the best and he has always said to us he wanted to go out a champion. I know he is considering his options carefully and winning at Athens may well be the right way for him to go."

Drivers' 'reservations' on Imola

Motor racing

Pierluigi Martini, a former Formula One driver, told a court yesterday that he and other drivers had reservations about the surface of the Imola racetrack before Ayrton Senna died in a crash there at the San Marino Grand Prix in 1994.

But the Italian, a prosecution witness at the manslaughter trial of six defendants including team owner Frank Williams, did not blame the circuit and said that the Tamburello bend where Senna died was a demanding stretch of track and acknowledged that there must have been an incident.

"A driver like Ayrton Senna that point unless there was some kind of problem," he

Martini said he, Senna and others had noticed a bump in the Tamburello bend before the race which reduced a car's abilities to keep the racing line. "There was a small bump in

the middle that unsettled the cars. I, Senna and others mentioned it 15 days before the grand prix," he told the court. very efficient, they had it ground

The racetrack officials were down a bit which was the only possible action, but the situation only improved slightly," he added.

SNOW REPORT - in association with Thomas Cook Ski Direct

However, Martini said that wouldn't have left the track at .. although the cars still grazed the surface with their side-skins, the drivers just needed to hold the correct line. He said there was only one line into Tamburello and the bump could not be avoided without leaving the track

> Asked whether such a bump could cause a steering column to break. Martini said that he had never known one to do so. He also said that Senna's fast lap time seemed to indicate that his tyres were fully warmed up.

The Italian also told the court that Senna had complained to him three weeks before the race that the handling of his car was "nervous".

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Williams springs upset on Majoli ying rounds and three main

Football

PONTINS LEAGUE Pro

Raskethall

The American teenager Venus Williams beat her first top 10 opponent, saving two match points as she surprised the fifth seed, Iva Majoli of Croatia, 7-5, 3-6, 7-5 in the Evert Cup women's tournament at Indian Wells, California, on Tuesday.

The 16-year-old Williams, playing in her first event of the year, qualified for the tournament on a wild card. Williams. ranked 211th, won two quali-

draw matches to reach the quarter-finals where she will play the American Lindsay enport. Williams and Majoli had to battle for two hours and 33 minutes under a scorch-

Mark Philippoussis, who recently recorded the fastest serve on the ATP Tour, served 23 aces as he defeated Andre Agassi 7-6. 7-6 in the second round of the Newsweek Champions Cup at the same venue. Philippoussis, the winner of

TODAY'S FIXTURES

Other sports ITON: Yonex All-England Open Champ (National Indoor Arens, Birmingham OWLS: Men's Home in

last week's Franklin Classic in Scottsdale, Arizona, was facing Agassi, the former world No L for the first time, but his servwho suffered his third successive first-round defeat.

Royer announced vesterday that they would be expanding their junior tennis initiative by pledging a further £2m over the next two years.

> TODAY'S NUMBER

26,399

The number of career points scored by Michael Jordan making him the sixth highest scorer in NBA history - after his 32 for Chicago Bulls against Boston on Tuesday night.

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ECB to break with tradition by appointing Graveney

They may have started with a blank sheet of paper, but sometime today the England Crick-et Board or at least the England Crick-et Board et Board, or at least the England of the job. If, for once, those management committee arm of it, will have to ink in the name of the new chairman of selectors. It may not be the most important decision they will ever have to make, but it is still one of the most traditional

However, what it clearly promises not to be - due to an alarming lack of candidates - is the hotly debated contest it was cided to play one more season last year, when Ian Botham with Essex, appears to be David Gravency, a former player with toppie Raymond Illingworth, the recently departed chairman. The lack of interest is probably not coincidental - following

words are converted into action - and under Lord MacLaurin they ought to be - then the new chairman will, in the Australian tradition, probably be little more could have been proposed, the than the unsalaried convenor of

selection meetings.

The likely, indeed just about only candidate for the job especially since Graham Gooch de-Gloucestershire, Somerset and Durham, and currently secretary of the Cricketers' Association. Unlike last year, when the

to be fought more in the media than the county boardrooms this year's election is being held in-house. But although this meant that virtually anyone identity of candidates was to be a strictly guarded secret.

five years in the role. He is suc-

ceeded by Adam Hollioake,

the vice-captain, who revealed honorary club captain in recognistic leadership potential when he nition of his past service and

English cricket's chairman of selectors is named today. Derek Pringle reports

Should Graveney be appoint-ed, he will be the first cricketers sociation. It is a conflict that has held the position. More worrying though, is that the unpaid posi-

Surrey have made Stewart

without Test experience to have twice prevented him from runuing in the past, and one that was only finally resolved last January. tion is bound to conflict with the when his employers finally acsalaried one he currently holds as ceded to him running for office.

The most sensitive compromise, however, will be in the area of discipline, and should an England player err, as Mike Atherton did when he misled the match referee after the soil in pocket incidem at Lord's. Graveney could end up playing both defender and prosecutor. On that occasion, Illingworth used his powers as chairman of

Hollioake succeeds Stewart as Surrey captain Alec Stewart has stepped down led England A on their hugely achievements, which included believe that this is in the best in-as the captain of Surrey after successful tour of Australia this leading the side to the AXA Eqleading the side to the AXA Eq- terests of both the club and myuity & Law Sunday League ti- self, so that I can return the best tle last season - their first results with bat and gloves. Ob-

fine possible on his captain. There is nothing wrong with that, except that Graveney would also be expected to he the player's representative should he appeal and the matter is taken before the Discipline Committee. It is a conundrum that will not have escaped Lord MacLaurin.

selectors to impose the maximum

the ECB's chairman and an apparent sticker for detail. Once he and the other six members of the England management committee, chaired by the Lancashire til the end of the summer before chairman Bob Bennett, have desetting any such wheels in mocided upon their man, they will thrash out the exact nature of his brief before announcing their choice to the public.

As a means of downgrading

the importance of the chairman of selector's role further, it is felt that MacLaurin would also like to appoint a full-time and fully salaried manager to be with the England team both at home and abroad. If that was the case then any disciplinary matters would be better served under his jurisdiction and not that of the chairman of selectors.

With an Ashes series just around the corner however, MacLaurin will probably wan unsetting any such wheels in motion. All of which means that if Graveney's name appears writ large this afternoon, then someone else will have to be in charge of the mortarboard and cane.

Offiah's

double

chance

Martin Offiah can look forward to the prospect of playing two

top-level rugby league and rugby union games within 24 hours next week, and said yesterday: "I

would like to think I am up to it."

Offiah is under contract to

play league for the London

Broncos and union for Bedford.

On Friday week, he could face

Warrington in the 13-man code

The prospect does not hold

and Rotherham in the 15-a-side

any fears for the former Wigan

player as he prepares for the

launch of the Broncos Super

League campaign against the

defending champions, St He-

lens, on Sunday.
Offiah, who only joined the

Broncos for training on Mon-day, said: "I would like to think

I am up to the challenge. At this

stage of my career it keeps

everything very exciting for me.

I still get the buzz out of scor-

ing tries. I have had two days

training already and I am very

keen and very much looking for-

ward to it. It's a bit like putting

on an old glove - I seem to fit

back into it quite well and

hopefully that should show on

Sunday.
"I think over the winter I have

improved. I think my handling

has definitely improved from

last season. There is a lot less

game the next day.

Now it really is make or break

The second season of Su-per League will start tomorrow in an atmosphere very different from that in which the first began a year ago, Then, the game was exhausted from its upheavals and full of trepidation over what the future might hold. This time, there is a feeling of anticipation and excitement among the players and supporters of the 12 Super clubs. There is a confidence that the worst is over and the best is about to begin.

Let us hope that this deter-mined optimism is not mere wishful thinking, because this is the season - which kicks off at Odsal where Bradford play Warrington - in which the new regime must work.

Even Maurice Lindsay, the Rugby League's chief executive, who originally talked cautiously of it taking three years for Super League and summer mgby to prove their worth, now believes that this will be the

breakthrough season.

Despite all the drum-beating. that breakthrough did not hap-pen last year. But then, with the game groping for its new di-rection and the rival attractions of a uniquely crowded summer of sport to contend with, that

was not surprising. For every St Helens or Bradbrave new world, there was a certainly apply to Salford, club struggling to come to terms with it. The signs are that more market should assure them of will succeed in doing so this time. an enjoyable season in Super

Dave Hadfield on

the challenges facing the new season of Super League

three sides that can win the championship. Apart from last season's two success stories, there is still Wigan, who cannot be completely written off but whose habit of winning is un-likely to be sufficiently indestructible to withstand all their

other problems. So, in all probability, it boils down to the Bulls and the Saints. Right at the moment, the balance tilts slightly towards Bradford, but, over the season as a whole, the extra experience and know-how that Shaun McRae brings to St Helens - and which proved crucial last year - could just tip the scales again.

Saints have overcome all their old temperamental frailnes and, while no one is as explosive as the Bulls on their day, the title can stay at Knowsley Road. Both clubs have an unmistakable buzz about them and that should be enough to put a little daylight between them and

Of those others, there will be several who will still have mem-For all that, there are only League, following their

promotion as First Division

champions. If you had to select a player as the most significant new signing at any club, it would be Sal-ford's Australian second row, John Cartwright - one of the most gifted forwards of the modern era and, in my humble view, worth the price of admission to The Willows on his own.

The side which should improve most on last season's Super League form is Leeds - and not only because they were so dreadful last year. Again, the tight signing from Australia could prove crucial. The former Canberra and St George hooker, Wayne Collins, has already given them the organisation that they lacked and the future looks far brighter.

There is reason, too, to expect an improvement from Warrington. If imports like Nigel Vagana and Tony Tatupu click, they will be a top four side, possibly at the expense of London, who are going to have to got their teeth and venture into the dreaded British transfer market if they are to match last season's efforts. Paris Saint-Germain are al-

ready a lot more formidable than

last year, but not necessarily as much fun as they were on Super League's opening night when they beat the Sheffield Eagles. Unlike the cliff-hanger of Australia in October.



success since lifting the NatWest viously, this is something I have thought long and hard about."

Martin Offiah, the former Wigan winger, in his new strip as a London Bronco at The Stoop Memorial Ground yesterday as the Super League side prepare for Sunday's opening game against the champions, St Helens

last summer, they will not be in relegation trouble. That grief seems to be earmarked for Oldham and Castleford, both clubs with proud traditions and good people involved, but without the depth of real talent needed to

compete week in, week out. All these clubs, good, bad and indifferent, will compete on a world stage this summer. That, indeed, is the defining feature of the season - the World Club They are now almost entire. Chammionship that will twice in. ly composed of discarded Austerrupt the Super League protralians, some of them very good gramme and which will lead to players, with chips on their quarter-finals and semi-finals in shoulders and plenty to prove. both hemispheres and a final in

As a competition which can be easily understood and sustained over an extended lifespan, the World Club Championship makes no sense whatsoever. But that doesn't matter; it has been designed as a one-season wonder and contrived to showcase Super League's international dimension.

Its real justification, however, is that it will throw up irresistible occasions. You might be would you really want to miss St Helens versus Anckland or London versus Brisbane?

ibre is already running high and that only serves to sharpen the sense of anticipation that is the prevailing mood this week. There might still be clubs in deep financial strife. There might still be too big a gap in playing standards, even within the elite division. But the action, fine-tuned to make tries a little harder to carve out, will be compelling. And, at the end of it all, there is the enduring magic of baffled by the labyrinthine com- a visit from the Australian

for a three-match series. It still is not an Ashes series with a capital A, because - bar-Interest in events of that cal-ring a rapid reunification with the

Britain is not in the frame of mind to hold it up to the light to examine the water-mark.

plexities of the competition, but Super League international side still dislikes, make or break. SUPER LEAGUE Opening fixtures: Tomorrows Brotiord v Wairington (7-30). Sunday: Leads v Odifican (3.0); London Broncos v St. Helens (6-35); Salford v Casaleford (3.0); Shoffield v Paris St-German (3.15); Wigan v Odifican (3.0).

players from key positions and new coach Phil Larder could find himself holding the club together through a transitional season.

one and nove the capacity to improve but they need to either make a lasting peace with lestyn Harris or to sell him and invest in a top-class stand-off, let Martin Demott (Migan), Nigel Vagane, Dallos Meed, Tony Tatupu (all Auckland), George Marin fleeds), Duti Mari, Jones Fibbs Vale RII), Jacon Lee Pontpridt, night purson), Coache John Dorahy, Last season: Afth, Prediction: Fourth.

Australian Rugby League - the tourists will lack players of the cal-ibre of Brad Fittler and Steve Menzies, just as Great Britain could be without ARL-affiliated players like Jason Robinson and Gary Connolly. But it will be closer to the real thing than we have had for a while. The game in

space in union because of the It is gung-ho and all systems extra men on the field, but I hope with the extra space in league I will be able to get back to my old ways of getting the ball across the line regularly.

Tony Currie, the Broncos head coach, also has few reservations about Offiah's commitment to both of rugby's codes. "He'll give us his best and being a professional he will give rugby union his best as well. I am just happy to get him here." "He looks after his body, he

trains well and he lives well so I have no qualms about him at all. I think he will make a big difference. He is still running around like a spring chicken. He has come back fresh, full of beans and surprisingly fit. I think he has had a break on the wing in rugby union."

The former Great Britain prop Kelvin Skerrett has agreed a new one-year contract with Halifax Blue Sox. Skerrett initially joined the Blue Sox on a short-term deal after his contract at Wigan was ended by mutual consent last year.

CLUB-BY-CLUB GUIDE TO THE SUPER LEAGUE

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CLUB-BY-CLUB GUIDE TO THE SUPER LEAGUE

board by the end of April. Coach: Peter Maholiand Islandereds
John Kear), Last season: Eleverth. Prediction: Ninth.

ST HELENS

Saints still look the best equipped side in the competition, despite a quiet winter with only one new signing. Their first, and perhaps trickest problem, is how to get through the opening weeks of the season without the suspended Bobble Goulding.

In Little Orbeit Worldand. Out: Adam Fogerly Ireleased. Coach: Name first, and perhaps trickest problem, is how to get through the opening weeks of the season without the suspended Bobble Goulding.

In Little Orbeit Worldand. Out: Adam Fogerly Ireleased. Coach: Warnington have more minguing newcomers than anyone and have the capacity to improve but they need to either make a lasting peace with lestyn Harris or to sell ham and struct in a lasting peace with lestyn Harris or to sell ham and struct in a lasting peace with lestyn Harris or to sell ham and struct in a lasting peace with lestyn Harris or to sell ham and struct in a lasting peace with lestyn Harris or to sell ham and struct in a lasting peace with lestyn Harris or to sell ham and struct in a lasting peace with lestyn Harris or to sell ham and struct in a lasting peace with lestyn Harris or to sell ham and struct in a lasting peace with lestyn Harris or to sell ham and struct in a lasting peace with lestyn Harris or to sell ham and struct in a lasting peace with lestyn Harris or to sell ham and struct in a lasting peace with lestyn Harris or to sell ham and struct in a lasting peace with lestyn Harris or to sell ham and struct in a lasting peace with lestyn Harris or to sell ham and struct in a lasting peace with lestyn Harris or to sell ham and struct in a lasting and sell last land structured in a lasting and sell last land stru

The great clicke about Super League is that promoted sides will find it fiendishly hard to adept, but Salford will Rill, Jeon Lee Prohymod, rugo have no great difficulty in doing so. Some inspired recurring points to them finishing comfortably in mid-table.

WIGAN WARRIORS

WIGAN WARRIORS the Andy Pest (Auckang), Esone Fairnaio (Leeds), Peter Martiand, Barra Fairnaio (Leeds), Peter Martiand, Barra Fairnaio (Leeds), Peter Martiand, Barra Marking (Barrand, Barra Marking), Barra Hampson (Least), Device Sam Parasso (Estatun), David Human (Leeds), Out-Sam Parasso (Estatun), Same Hampson (Human), Same Hampson (Cannes), Ah Davis (Hundersteld), Peul Manason (Human), Rehend Webster (Bath, rughy unton), David Young (Cardiff, rughy unton), Canada Andy Gregory, Last season: First Davison Champsons, Inc. David Marking (Least), Canada Andy Gregory, Last season: First Davison Champsons, Inc. David Marking (Least), Canada Andy Gregory, Last season: First Davison Champsons, Inc. David Marking (Least), Canada Andy Gregory, Last season: First Davison Champsons, Inc. David Marking (Least), Canada Andy Canada (Least), Canad

LINGFIELD

In: Dond Murray (Auckland), Stuart Lester (Auckland), Steather Holgate (Workington), Ian Sherratt (Didram), Paul Kolos (Casteshury, NZ), Oute Martin Dermott (Warmgton), Andy Craig Steinfon), Shem Tatupu (Northampton, rugy urson), Coach: Eric Hughes (succeeds Graeme West), Last season: Second. Prediction: Trird.

HYPERION 2.15 Biya 2.45 In The Money 3.20 Soaking 3.50 Meliors 4.20 Renown 4.50 Bowcliffe Grange 5.25 Kl Chi Saga GOING: Equitmeck - Standard, STALLS: Inside, 5(A) in outside DRAW ADVANTAGE: Low in springs

Rigiu-hand course.

Rigiu-hand course.

Course is SE of town on B2028. Station adjoins course. AD
AUSSION: Members \$13, Pamily Enclosure \$2. CAR PARIE: Prec.

BLIMEERD FIRST TIME: None.
WINNERS IN THE LAST SEVEN DAYS; None.
LONG-DISTANCE EURNEES: Mister Aspecto (2.45) &
Shantaine (3.50) sen 270m by M Johnston from Middleham.

- 11 declared -BETTING: 11-4 Blyz, 4-1 Dresse Currier, Caston, 5-1 Roman Reel, 12-1 Lave Legend, Princely Affair, Spectacle San, 14-1 others 2.45 REID MINTY SOLICITORS HANDICAP (CLASS D) £4,900 added 1m 4f

1 081310 085 0FF THE RML (207) KCD 61 More 7 10 Q., S Welsowsh 5 2 114036 MRSTER ASPECTO (1469 KCD) M Johnson 4 9 10 Dono McKeewin 2 V 311-223 WOTDESHAMBLES (30) (C D BF) 1 M Half 6 95 4 W Ryen 6 44222-0 LONG (B) (CD) (B) G Loss 9 9 0 A Whelso (S) 3 B 341133 W THE MONEY (20) (CD) R Holmsteed 8 8 11 D Gettles (S) 4 400-313 ZOCKROON (CS) (CD) F From Heyer 6 8 2 D Biggs 1 CO1526 FABILIOUS MTOTO (218) (C) H Saundes 7 7 10 R Firench (7) 7

- 7 decisted -BETTING: \$-2 in The Money, 7-2 Lold, 5-1 Wottschambles, One Off The Rull, 8-1 Zucarrom, 6-1 Mister Aspecto, 18-1 Paintinus Minto

3.20 RED MINTY LIBEL & SLANDER CLAIM-ING STAKES (CLASS E) £4,025 added 79

10 632550 OUR SHADEE (14) (22) K boy 7 9 4_Asthony Bord (7) 8 V - 10 doctored - 3 4 Asthony Bord (7) 8 V BETTING: 11-4 Greatest, 4-1 Society, 5-1 Ertica, 6-1 Invocation, 7-1 Purple Play, 8-1 Quinzil Martin, Spensor's Revenge, 12-1 others

3.50 COST AUDITING CLAIMING STAKES (CLASS F) £3,300 added 61 334060- RUNS IN THE FAMILY (168) (D) G McCourt 5 9 5 ...

5 0160-26 SECRET M21 (25) (25) (35) (37) C Brazan 7 9 2 _____ W Ryan 7 6 451-301 PRINKAN (23) (20) G McCourt 4 8 13 _____ R Stathnium (7) 2 01000-2 RENOVAN (35) (20) Loot hartergoon 5 8 10Airmee Cook (5) 8 2 02233 ROBELLION (9) (20) D Attuitro (6 8 5 ____ S Wilsowth 1 V 9 22104-0 SHERBY (17) (5) S Kettlovel 5 8 5 _____ Navy Remove (7) 9 10 (506-62 DNGPNST (6) (5) M Modelsed, 7 8 4 _____ Martin Duyer (3) 4 13 313015 TALLIULAH SELLE (12) (20) N Latandon 4 8 2 _____ J Quiet ARCH (28) (20) W Martin 2 6 0 _____ J Strandon (5) 3 -12 declared 4

- 12 decierci -BETTING: 5-1 Punkutı, 6-1 South Emilem Fred, Socret Aly, Quet Arch, 7-1 Rentum, 8-1 Robellon, Coran Park, 12-1 Others

4.50 REID MINTY PROPERTY SOLUTIONS HANDICAP (CLASS D) £4,900 added 5f

BETTING: 2-1 Perbo Magic, 7-2 Non's Goth Hire, 4-1 Sally Stanie, 9-2 Gi La High, 8-1 Bowcliffe Grangs, 14-1 Mijes, 20-1 Intinash

5.25 REID MINTY LITIGATORS AMATEUR HYCAP (CLASS F) (DIV II) £2,800 added 1m

3-06342 DON'T DROP BOMBS (9) (CD) D'Rom 8 10 0. 10 GP000-0 SUSSEX GORSE (17) | Lang 6 9 0 Mr T Waters (7) - 10 declared -BETTING: 7-2 Bold Habit, 9-2 Private Pature, Eastleigh, 6-1 Ni Cai Saga, Gadge, Don't Drop Bourbs, 8-1 Statisticiae, 12-1 others

RACING RESULTS CHELTENHAM

CHELTENHAM

2.00: 1. TARRING CF Swen 6-5 tar,

2. Wighty Mose 11-1; J. Dangdim 16-1.

17 ran, 1 ½. (A O'Bren, Balkdoyle, Veland).

Total 22:00; £150, 22:20, 13-30, Dual Foreceix: £10.60. Computer Straight Forecast.

£11.43. That £68, 70. Non Russners Marrimara Touers, Marrichas & Red Bisser.

**236: 1. WARTHA'S SON (R Funcati 9-1:

2. Mart Total 5-1; 3. Valuing Fregula 3-1. 8

ran: 5-2 tay. Strong Promise (520: 24-4;

(Capt 2-Funcar, Dounton). Fotus: £11.00:

23.10: £2.00. OF: £21.10. CSF: £45.94. NonRighter Archic Karsman.

23.07.22(0) (P. 22.1.0) (S. 20.2.0)
23.16.1, 282 STRARD (Jornio Edens) 1612.2 Allegation, 20-1; 3. Courte Sweep 1413. Bidgerry Borf 9.2 Sw. 28 cm. 53-hd.
14. Bidgerry Borf 9.2 Sw. 28 cm. 53-hd.
14. Bidgerry Borf 9.2 Sw. 20 cm. 53-hd.
16. Bidgerry Borf 9.2 Sw. 20 cm. 53-hd.
16. Bidgerry Borf 9.2 Sw. 20 cm. 53-hd.
16. Bidgerry Borf 9.2 Distraction 100-30 km.
16. Bidgerry Borf 9.2 Distraction, Toks:
17.49, \$220, £120, £1.90, OP. £18.70.
17.49, \$220, £120, £1.90, OP. £18.70.
17.29, \$230, £120, £1.90, OP. £18.70.

CST-229.38 Top. £19.30. NRs: Cooks Equa-

CST. 2038: Top. 219-30. Nec Cook Sym. 9 & Rentenn.

4.00 E. Parassy Traiting On M Hards 33-1:2. Mil Par Held 13-2; 3. Restrand 9-1.

23 mil. 6-1 in Transcorn Harnest (nutled up).

11/4. 71. 81/866501, Hardson, Tools: ESG.CO., £11.70; £2.60; £1.90. DF: £163.10. CSF. £120.28. Tele: £133.90. Non Runners: Codologic Dividers Brook, Easy Breaty.

2.605.12. 18190 (1 J Husphy) 20-1; 2. All The Acces 20-1; 3. All Short 15-2; 13 eas.

100.30 to All to Acces (ES). 14, Inf. (M. Pap., Tellington), Tools: £3.40; £5.40.

£130. £2.50. DF: £3.49.50. CSF. £25.485.

Inguist £2.604.22. Tele: £152.70. NRS: Best
rent Cardinold Rougen.

CST. BELGS. Part 230.041.

serialit intrins (post of £129,898.13 cst.

self injury in Chalentum India).

Places of £120.09. Place 5: £808.96.

Places 5: £220.09. Place 5: £808.96.

HANTINGTON

HANTINGDON

Line: Expense Styleon I level 3

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1 has de done had \$-2: 3. Employ the 5

1 has the man 2 feb hands; both 12-50;
11-30; 21-50; 22-30; DF: £13.10. CSF;
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2,00: 1. SHEELIN LAD IT Reed) 33-1: 2. The Soldier 11-4; 3. Night Fency 20-1: 11 ran. 5-2 for Respers Rock (ursested rider). nk: 15. Aus T McTrees Sirrer). Tota: 159-80; 15:70; 2-2.40; 55:10. DP: 522-20. CSP: 5113-57. Increst: £1,797-46. Tric: £199-70. 3. St. 1. Right Charming 9-2; 3. Shifting bloom 11-2: 9 ran. ½, 11. [I Cosep). Tota: £2.30; £1.10, £2.50; £2.20. DP: £9.00. CSP: £11.00. Tricest: £3-31. Tric: £15.50. 12.00, 11 (a), 250, 12.1 Thr. £15.50. 4.06.1 TRIY (* Bey) 7-4 Sey 2. This Net-tic Danger 11-2, 3. Tiger Claw 8-1. 5 am. 24, 36, 46 Streeter). Total £2.30; £1.60, £1.90. DE: £11.80, CSF. £11.12. Non Run-

ner (Rini. 4.40: 1. her combuctor (JR Kenenagh) 1.6 tey. 2. Kelbellen 6-1; 3. Deep Song 21-1.3 ten. 21, 14. (R Alner). Tobs: £1.10. DF: £1.40, CSF: £1.64, NRs: Growth & Pess-

Sun Bay. 5.15: 1. LORD LANG (G Lee) 4-5 fee; 2. 5.15: 1. LORD Dates (a. 162) 4-3 mir. 2. Dec's Amery Two 7:2: 3. Kandyson 12: 1. 11 mir. 4. 2. (Mrs. M. Reveley). Total: £1.40; £1.10, £1.80, £5.00, DF: £5.70. CSP: £4.75. Idor. £26.60. Mir. Another Rumeus, last Perry & Sunday Verture. Placeport: £301.40. Quantiport. £3.70. Place &: £159.30. Place &: £82.31.

NEWTON ABBOT
2.10:1. COURT MASTER (P Holis): 8-11
tox; 2. Finnings Free 10-1; 3. Insulget: 51. 7 rds. 1, 11. (R Bucker). Fote: £1.50;
£1.20, £8.70. DP: £18.90. CSF. £9.89.
2.40:1. DEFENDMEMERIA (F Food): 11.
8 tax; 2. Amenicar 25-1; 3. Rich Tyonos 331.3 rds. 7, 6. (R from): Tota: £2.90; £1.40;
£5.50, £5.80. DP: £58.70. CSF. £43.41. MR:
Millous Roulems. Tric: not won.
3.10:1. OREWIELL 14D fibr S Duracis 84.0v: 2. indivenient 11.4: 3. Bit of A Touch
4.1.4 rds. 12; 15. (P Hobbs): Tota: £3.70.
DP: £3.30. CSF. £5.61.
2. Cassio's Boy 2-1 (f tay; 3. La

2.48.1 HOLD YOUR RANGS (1 Frost) 51: 2. Cassio's Boy 2-1 it tay, 3. La
Menorgation 9-2.5 man, 2-1 it tay filtin, 1/4,
5: (i) Frost). Total: 55-20: 53-10, 51-50. DE:
5: 02. CSF. £14.77.
4.20: 1 HERMORES (by L. Leitord) 16-1;
2. Kaloore 7-4 it tay; 3. Good King Henry
9-1: 11 man, 12, dec. (b) sc A Howard-Crepped). Total: \$22.20; £2.60, £1.50, £2.60.
DE: £22.20. CSF. £45.40. Tax £44.50.
DE: £22.20. CSF. £25.30. Tax £45.40. DE:
£27.70.

5.30. £. \$4. VERNNE: £5. Benough £4-1;
2. Top Janualin 5-4 lac 2. Benough £4-1;
2. Top Janualin 5-4 lac 2. Benough £4.50.

5.30: 1. SELVERINGE (S. BUROUS) 13-1; 2. Top Jamelle 5-4 fac, 1. Bournel 6-1. 8 fad, dist. 1% (P. Androd). Fate: £12.80; 53.40, £1.80. 01: £7.90. CSP. £31.38. Placespot. £55.50. Questpot: £27.00. Place 9: £159.30. Place 5: £82.31.

2.25 Apollo's Daughter 3.00 Railegio 3.35 Tico Gold 4.05 Southern Cross 4.40 Pariah 5.15 New

GOING: Good (Good to Soft in places).

Left-hand, undubting course. Bun-in of 250yd.

Course is on univer road 2m south of Heathum. Signposted from town. Heathum station 2m. ADMISSION: Club SS; Paddock S6 (OAPs 54). CAR PAEE: Free.

BUDNESSED FREST TIME: Premine Price (3.35).
WINNESS IN THE LAST SEVEN DATE: Call Wind (4.40) won at Carlisic on Thursday. LONG-DISTANCE BUNNESS: Grace-Card (5.15) & Rimoueld (5.15) have been sent 183 miles by B E Cambidge from Biotop's Wood, Staffordshire. 2.25 CONDITIONAL JOCKEYS' HANDICAP HUR-DLE (CLASS E) £3,000 added mares 2m

203-0 QUALITAR PRIDE (32) I BOTTOM STOCKED WATERS ZITT 203-0 QUALITAR PRIDE (32) I BOTTOM 5 11 12 ____ E Callegiant 20-POD NELL THYME (36) (5) P Beautont 5 11 E _____ S Grattom (02) 222- CAPCH THE PRECING (367) R Bor 8 11 2 ____ P Madesth (3644-6 TANCHED MESCHEF (90) D Botte 6 11 2 ____ P Madesth (55-1035 - PESSY GORDON (13) Nep 1 Promoso 6 11 0.H Monrook (5) 5-35956 RELL'S PRIDE (5) P Montesth 6 10 13 ____ L MicCommodt (5) 0-PGAZ - AMBERT ROLLY (52) Discover 3 10 13 ____ L marker (5) 0-PGAZ - AMBERT ROLLY (52) Discover 9 10 8 ___ F Leaby 00000-0 MELLERS GOLDENGER (42) Me 9 Smith 6 10 3 ___ G F Ryen 0-PGGD 9 30 PGDH (7) N Sycrat 8 10 2 ____ G Leaby 00000-0 Statement (8) W Young 8 10 0 ____ S Tandor

3.00 ANN LEBON NOVICE CHASE (CLASS E) £4,200 added 2m 110yds 524-131 RALIEGIO (30) (D) P Mortesth 8 11 10...

3.35 WIN WITH THE TOTE HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS D) £5,500 added 4m

P3-1520* HERVENLY COUZEN (13) J Geston 9 10 12 K Johnson 205665* HUDSON BAY TRADER (19) (2) P Resultors 10 10 B. 231223 7000 COLD (8) P Cheesbough 9 10 5 ______ S Cabie

4.05 KEOGHANS NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS E)

4.40 FEDERATION BREWERY H'CAP CHASE (CLASS F) £3,800 added 2m 4f 110yds 12/3252 PARAN (7) DET Marin Techniser 8 11 5 ______ Callaghan 32004 SUPPOSIN (21) (CD) Mirs 5 Sindi 9 11.5 _____ Callaghan 68555-9 RISSY BLADE (CD) P Marintin 8 11 4 _____ Mir R Marintin 5544 (CR) MD SCENERY (5) (D) 11 (Dringar) 9 10 13 ___ A Rammion

- 12 declared -SETTING: 7-2 Chill Wind, 9-2 Pariet, 5-1 Lest Refuge, 7-1 Tighter Bud-

5.15 BUCHANAN ALE HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS F) £2,650 addled 3m 2 R-56113 MENSHAMR (USA) (47) (CD) (BF) L Lungs 5 12 0 ... R Supple 2311-63 NEW CHARGES (28) (CD) ⁵ Beaumont 10 11 68 Gratian (S)

8 050203 19165 LINE (5) (C) 1 Dan 8 10 13 9 03-035 CORRELITIES S 88 7 10 0 K Schroom
10 P-2130P IONES WINSTRAL (45) (C) Dianto 7 10 0 Burlos
11 0-00005 THE OTHER MAIN (14) MES L Scholl 7 10 0 Pears – 11 declared – Mannum weight 10st. True handcup weight Contex So. 13th, Kings Minstral

95 125. The Cirier Mars 9st Sh. BETTING: T-2 Dockmanter, 4-1 Monsham, 5-1 Kings Lama, 7-1 Kenila Lad, Five Fings, 8-1 Mags Minstral, Riscound, 12-1 others.

TOTE CHELTENHAM GOLD CUP

CHASE (CLASS A) (Grade 1) £200,000 3m 2f 110yds

111-312 ADDRESON BOY (47) (C) (D) 9 12 0 A Dobbin

(Owned: Gott Foods Ltd) Bained: G Richards Won so, make chases last season and his posted three smart runs pier 2m ff of this tracking term. He has 2 lengths and 10to to make up on Dubin Figer on their running here in Lanuary but may be better suited by this trip and flees fast ground.

For class notice two seasons ago when trained by Mastin Pipe, but has been objected on for cold and last been off the track sides. His one disappointing run came on this track and it will be arranging if he can make a wanting return after such a long absence.

9 20-2532 BARRON BANK (67) (C) (D) 11 12 0 D Walter (Denet 16: 3 Month) Reiser, D Michalson

The 1993 Ring George W Chase winner is still remembered for taking at the fast when leading in the same race the following year. His Jumping is still furnilable but he did little wrong when making One Man work for yetony here in January. Poor record on this year.

4 23-1681 CHAYTERSER DU LUC (35) (C) 7 12 0 ... C Mende (Clement O & Johnson) Trainert M Pipe

Wirner of the Cathcart Chase at last year's Festival and the Mur-phy's Gold Cup here in November, the track holds no fears for hem but he is unproved at the trip. Sometimes none moudily, includ-

A former point to pointer who is unbeaten in his completed starts this sessor, including the Henricssy Gold Cup. That success was achieved off a low bandicup markand he will need to improve again if he is to figure. Yesterday's win by Henrakham frants' his form.

ing once this season, and needs restraining for a late run.

5 2/14-111 - CYBORGO (26) (D) 7 12 0....

Pitman's Lad can solve Cup conundrum

RICHARD EDMONDSON Racing Correspondent

The winners' enclosure security at the Festival this week has been so severe the thought has occurred it would be easier to penetrate Fort Knox in search of samples. Edward Gillespic, the course's managing director, must have brought himself to the attention of Jack Rowell yesterday when he tackled some rapscallion who vaulted over the rail. It took some time for him to be persuaded that his victim was Aidan O'Brien, the trainer who was attempting to welcome back Istabrag after success in the opening race.

Fortress Cheltenham may, however, get its ultimate test today. If Danoli wins the Gold Cup, there will be armies of Irishmen attempting to storm the gates with ladders. Mr Gillespie may be going home with footprints on the back of his tweed jacket this evening.

Danoli is a nation's darling. His keeper, Tom Foley, is an unassuming, delightful figure and the horse has fought back from the near-death experience of a broken leg. The travelling romantics are with him to a man.

Danoli is a mercurial figure, who either wins or falls over fences. He has also developed the tendency of becoming emotionally disturbed at the course. This is not the perfect credential for the Cleeve Hill bear pit

Danoli, like Dorans Pride and Cyborgo, is a novice and a member of their ranks has not emerged victorious since Captain Christy 23 years ago. Whether Dorans Pride tries to arrest that statistic will emerge this morning, when the track will be unusually busy while the

mists are still lingering. Michael Hourigan. Dorans Pride's trainer, and Walter Dennis, the preparer of Coome Hill, will monitor the Prestbury Park turf, now described as good to firm in places, to de-



Martha's Son (left) is poised to pounce on the leaders in yesterday's Queen Mother Champion Chase

termine whether it is safe to let their charges participate. In addition. Gordon Richards, the man behind Addington Boy, will make a decision on whether his charge has recovered sufficiently from a leg problem he sustained at work on Saturday.

Dorans Pride also carries with him some poignancy. Just over 12 months ago he was struck by colic and it took two operations and the removal of gny-rope lengths of intestine from his gut to save him. It is his legs which are now threat-

ened as the moisture disappears from the ground. Coome Hill is a more likely runner. The farmer's horse

from Cornwall arrived at the

RICHARD EDMONDSON NAP: Nahthen Lad (Cheltenham 3.15) NB: L'Opera (Cheltenham 2.00)

Walter Dennis may be per- dled by Gordon Richards which suaded by Jamie Osborne, Coome Hill's jockey, that the course will not endanger England's equivalent of Danoli in the realm of melodrama.

The class horses of the race can be identified as Imperial Call and One Man. The former appeared unconquerable in his win here 12 months ago, but has since become an equine Frank Spencer, finding calamity rushing to him wherever he goes.

Grey Monk has been withdrawn and doubts surround Addington Boy. The grey is reported on particular good terms with himself after a session out in the fields chasing Reynard. However, Cheltenham's undulations seem to have a peculiar effect on him and it may be that he will react as if someone has ripped out his spark plugs in the

Photograph: David Ashdown

butterfly over this course and distance

now may be halved as The In this porridge of impon-derables there is one horse who has shown aptitude for these surroundings and will not be hindered by the going. Jen-ny Pitman has established with Garrison Savannah that she can nurture a horse from the proving ground of the Sun Aliiance Chase through to the greatest prize of all. She may be ing to him wherever he goes. Straight. The otherwise reabout to do it again, quite One Man was to have been doubtable Dublin Flyer is an shockingly for most, with part of a four-strong battery sadouter who looks as brittle as a NAHTHEN LAD (nap 3.15).

8 11111F BORANS PRIDE (28) (BF) 8 12 0 ... 1 P Broderick (Owner! T / Dorari) Trained: M Hourigan (88) Comprehensively best Cyborgo in the 1995 Stayers' Hundle here and has bilger well to lienees, wirning five times. The mistake that

felied him lest time was unclaracteristic. He would prefer easier ground but bas the talent to overcome that obstacle. Has been bester only once in its completed starts over the pest time seems and now one in its completed starts over the pest times seems for this course. However, be the not contested a tip as long as this since his nowice days and was pulled up, inemplicably, in this race last year.

4

(Owned: Mrs 8.) Locktent) Trained: J O'Shea Has shown improvement this season, but certainly prefers racing on a right-harded park and needs to regain his confidence after a fall-last time out; it any case, his good run has been echieved from a low handicals mark and he looks out of his depth here.

11 F111 43. IMPERIOR CELL (39) (CD) (EF) 8 12 0... C Crowyer (Context i Sides) Firms (ad) Refrect F Statestand (th) The refrect of last yellige Sold Cup has not had an ideal preparation for describing the title, failing land being remounted) on his return and their heavy original by Danok in the Hexmessy at Leonantstann, if he repurs to his best he rount he a threat.

Took adventures of Mr Mullipur's Cellibert jumping to win at last year's Festinal but struggled to recapture his form this term. He is unlikely to be suited by this lively ground but his trainer, lenny Pinnan, sucals at bringing classers to their peak for important prizes.

44 16-1112 ONE-MAN (SIG) (C) (D) (EF) 9 12 0 R Dumwoody (Chaped's Halest Tokned's Richards
The bounds's top classer had his difficultions exposed when favourite for this last year and again failed to fluish showly when just besting Botton Book Toknesh Jamany. The stiff birst does not soit him, the trip is too faciand his is yet to show his best at this time of year.

15-23-1222 UNGEDED BISSEE 20 (CRF) 9 12 O.N. WILL (Daniel: D.E. Hantson; Balned: G.Richards Consistent surfaces was placed in a handicay at the festival last Consider and with was processed in a manager of the season was year and again telping Coorne (III), to whom he was going bit, at a wincoming against line. They form going this an outside chance but

e as though this trip is just beyond him.

BETTING: 5-1 deported Cast., 21-2 Coome Hill, 2-1 One Man, 7-1 Desoil, 3-1 Gorgus Pride, Dublin Fiyer, 3-1 Addington Boy, 12-1 Cyberge, 14-1 Challenger Do Luc, 15-1 Hr Mulligan, Ungained Missile, 20-1 Rathfred Lad, 40-2 Banjo, 50-1 Barrior Bank, 56-1 Go Saffictio 1990: Imperial Call 7 12 0 C GO Dayler 9-2 (F Sufficients (inf) 10 ran

CHELTENHAM 2.00: KERAWI was beaten 21/2 lengths by L'Opera at Kempton last month but the former is 4lb better off today and this tougher track will suit him. White Sea will be fancied to gain revenge on the selec-tion, who beat Martin Pipe's runner by 11/4 lengths at Newbury. Char-lie Swan was blamed for that defeat but Cari Llewellyn's mount can

prove today that win was no fluke. 2.35: WHAT A QUESTION, third to Cyborgo in this race last year, is arguably better than ever at the age of nine and can hold last year's Coral Cup winner, Trainglot.



4

RANS PRIDE to take his chance then the up should be taken. He holds Cyberge on hurding form, has taken well to fences, likes this track and has limitless potential.

3.55: CAB ON TARGET, a former high-class staying hurdler, won his 3.15: If Michael Hourigan decides likes fast ground. Irish raider What that the ground is suitable for DO- A Hand may pose most problems.

GOLD CUP 10 YEAR TALE 1987 88 69 90 Pt 92 93 94 95 96
Fate of the javourness 7 P 3 3 7 5 4 2 3 8
Wester's pince in betting 2 A 1 0 D 0 2 3 1 2
Starting pinces 132 981 52 100 101 25 81 71 103 92 Percentage of winners placed Late 2nd or Sed to lead these 100% Shortest priced winner: Desert Select 5-2 (1989) oughest-priced where: Marting Cole. 100-1 (1990) 3:-Op trainers: No trainer had use the part more than ough to the past 10 years Jup Jockeyer no jockey has son the face more than pools in the part 10 years.





* THE INDEPENDENT

'Tiger' rouses Forster into paying a moving tribute

GREG WOOD

reports from Cheltenham

Joy, despair, relief and inebtiation are just some of the emotions which can bring tears to the eve at the Festival, and within just 45 minutes of the second day at Cheltenham, all four of them had. Tim Forster, not normally given to displays of feeling, ' visibly moved by the success in the Queen Mother Champion Chase of Martha's Son - "the kindest and nicest horse that I've ever had anything to do with". Istabrao, meanwhile, brought

SunAlliance Hurdle. The ine-

briation soon followed. It meant, among other things, that Martha's Son was swiftly forgiven for beating the favourites in the Champion Chase. As the six runners set off, only Lord Dorcet, a hopeless 50-1 chance, stood at longer odds physique of Strong Promise. warded as Strong Promise galloped eagerly towards the that makes you very emotional."

So too was Istabraq, 6-5 fav-

ery to the ring in the Royal knocked every ounce of enthusiasm from his frame.

Now it was Martha's Son, who had not completed a race for nearly 18 months, who was clearly going best, and the little horse - "a tiger", Forster called him - did not disappoint. "He's the most honest, genuine and tough horse I've ever had," the than Martha's Son, with the trainer said. "A child of five could resting on the impressive low you around like a dog. But knocked him off his feet. Istawhen he gets on a racecourse That faith seemed sure to be re- he's explosive, he completely changes character. He's a horse

the hill to a crescendo of joy. So too was Istabraq, 6-5 fav- counterfeit Irish £20 notes in cir-

punter was depending. Nothing short of win for Danoli in today's Gold Cup will bring a bigger roar, and the manner of his success added to the excitement. Having sweated up, Charlie Swan's mount was last as they passed the post the first time, and though he had joined the leaders by the second-last, a mid-air braq recovered and stayed on up

The subsequent Tannoy announcement which warned of delight to the punters and mis- but a horrible mistake there ourite for the opener and the culation was thus somewhat in-

horse on whom every Irish accurate, since circulation requires movement in two directions. Instead, the cash flow was one way, with JP McManus, Istabraq's owner, the most grateful beneficiary. Ireland's most famous punter had suffered second-degree burns to his betting fingers the previous afternoon, when Finnegan's Hollow fell in the opener. The balance

"I chased my losses with this Strand got up in a photo for the rise and I'm now showing a Coral Cup having jumped the horse and I'm now showing a on", the word "small" may also be something of an understate-

ment. McManus also looked beyond his wallet, paying tribute to John Durkan, who was diagnosed as suffering from leuk-aemia just before he was due to start a training career, with Istabraq among his charges.
"But for John, I wouldn't have this horse," McManus said. "Ihope this gives him a lift." The rest of the day belonged

small profit," McManus said, and since he is in the habit of desrib-completed a double in the Milding five-figure bets as "a few quid may of Flete with Terao, his fourth winner of the meeting. Results and cards, page 25.

FORM GUIDE THEE WON'T WAIT, who usually needs a race or two to come to hand, may wall have started this season with a win if he had not missed out at the final fence at Haydook and let in Konvekta King to best Easthorpe and Political Tower. Cartainty Strong has every tope of being the first winning mans at the meeting. She took to fences well lest season, winning the first winning the starts before having training problems, and came book well after more than a year off to win at Sandown last morth. Taking a heavy fall there a formight lastmore than a year off to win at semicoren reasonation affect her chance and, being lightly erwhen odds on in Mister Oddy's race shouldn't affect her chance and, being lightly selection: TIME WON'

5.05 CATHCART CHALLENGE CUP CHASE (CLASS B) £45,000 added 2m 5f Penalty Value £32,850 54-2343 DESTIN D'ESTEUNAL (FR) (20) (DE) (Decen C Mercer) D Nicholson 6 11 7 D Bridg ...B Store Williamson

SALEST THE REVEREND BERT (12) DO (LOT VESTE) HER THE STATE OF THE STAT

1996: Challenger Ou ture 6 11:3 D Bindgenter 10-1 (M Pipe 11) ran FORM editing.

Marton Pipe has certainly upset the applicant by bringing out Tuesday's Aride winner OR ROY-AL again. The danger, of course, is that his run just over 50 hours earlier may have taken a lot out of him. Double Synaphosay was about to take the lead when she came down four out in last year's Aride and later ran the eventual winner, Ventana Caryon, to a short-head in the mud at Punchestown, where Manihattana Castle was 21 lengths back in fourth. Pierry of out seems more or less essential for Manihattan Castle, but Double Symphony has shown she can handle it tesser by winning over handles at Sandown and a virtual match over fences at Newbury this season. She's a classy mare and well able to take advantage if Or Royal has eith his race behind on Tuesday. The transformation of Statelly Home from selling hunder to a useful front-running cheser has been the success story of the season. However, dier to a useful front-running chaser has been the success story of the season. However he looks to have bitten off far more than he can chew on this occasion. Wild West Wing

ı				
	Tr.	- 40	VINCENT O'BRIEN COUNTY HANDICAP HURDLE	(CLASS A
	5	J.40	(Grade 3) £30,000 added 2m 1f Penalty Value	£26 615
1	-	A00/04.0		
ı	1	U32015	STONEPON (313) (The Voice Group Ltd) Miss H kniger 6 11 10	
•	2	1111-13	PERHY A DAY (81) (J Good) Mrs M Reveley 7 11 8.	P 1944
ı	3		ROMANCER (21) (D) (BF) (M Archer & Miss / Broadhust) N T-Davies 6 11	
•	4		CHERYL'S LAD (82) (CD) (Mrs Biane Bianes) N Henderson 7 11 4	
ļ	5	F1F-F16	EDELMEIS DU MOULIN (FR) (33) (BF) (Robert Ogger) G Richards 5 11 3 .	R Descripted
!	6	0-20106	KADASTROF (FR) (5) (A P Paton) R Dictor 7 11 2	X Abpere (7
	7	60-312P	STAR RAGE (S) (CD) (J David Abell) J L Harris 7 11 1	D Gallactic
	8	<u>211324</u>	LADY DNSY (5) (P F Kehoe) Arthony Mulins v 8 11 1	6 Brade
	9	<u> 12110</u>	TOAST THE SPREECE (25) (Golden Step Racene Syndicates A O'Rigen (NO 5	111_CFS
	10	3-11332	HAMEJON SEX (33) (D) (Ele: Ricing Club) M Pipe 5 11 0	A P MeCe
	11	U-43364	BARNA 907 (34) (Lynn Wilson) N Henderson 9 10 12	R Dummoor
	12	816-303	EMBELLISHED (28) (High Street Racing Syndicate) N Meads (b) 5 10 12.	P Heate
	13	114423	TOM BRODGE (28) (AVIS M W (Skd) J Howard Johnson 7 10 10	A Dobbi
	14	222346	MYTTORES CHOICE (54) (C) (C) (G) (G) Mytton) D Nicholson 6 10 9N	r 2 Thornton A
	15	3.35360	GROUND MUT (5) 30) (Mrs R L Haskins) R Buckler 7 10 6	R Bosse
	16	032126	BLACK QUEEN (18) (Herz Polmeer) J Ney (kil 5 10 4	AIOTH
		40-3124	AMERIESEDE (21) (8 M Ym) Mrs S Williams 6 10 0	D Bridgest
			SLEW MAN (FR) (12) (B A RESIDENCE M Pipe 6 10 0	
	19	441411	CARLITO BRIGANTE (5) (Lady Barnford) P Webber 5 10 0 (7ed)	
	20	0.12058	CELTIC LORE (19) (Cr Michael Smurit) D Weld (in 5 10 0	
	21	140300	TIDJANI (25) (J P McManus) F Berry (ki) 5 10 0	
'	22	14.2020	FAUSTING (159) (The Bibrook '4') P Hotos 5 10 0	
	ä	173783	MORSTOCK (7) (Mrs M Parteuri) R Hodges 7 10 0	
		12,02(6)	= 23 decision =	1 nestronas (r

Normani wegint 10st. Inan hondican wegints Slew Man 9ct 13b, Carito Briganse 9ct 13b, Celife Lore 9st 13b, Tigani 9st 13b, Faustino Set 8b, Morstock 9st 8b.

BETTINES 6-1 Panny A Day, 7-1 Carito Briganto, 8-1 Elebreis De Moulle, 12-1 Embelliched, Hamilton Silk, Lady Dalay, Roussacae, 14-1 Black Queen, Charyl's Lad, Tom Brodle, 18-1 Ambleside, Celtic by Datey, Roussaces, 14-1 Black Queen, Chery's Lad, Tom Brodie, 16-1 Ambiest The Spreece, 29-1 Star Rage, 26-1 Burns Boy, Slow Man, Tuliani, 33-1 other Rage 6 10 0 D Saltaghar 14-1 U L Hans) 28 mm

This looks a lot hotter compared to when Star Rage bear Romanicer, Non Virtuage and Cheryl's Led 12 months ago and a more significant context is lest month's Tots Gold Trophy at Newbury in which Selekreis Du Moutis never looked like justifying support behind Make A Stand and ins stablemate Hamiliton Silk. Northing outle get near Make A Stand, which is rarry surpring considering he is now the champion hundler, and Hamiliton Silk came through to pick up the packs in the cleaning stages. It's untilety the form can be taken at lace value and Ecleweis Du Moutin, who had hadded up from Tota Brodier (8th better ni) at Watherby the time before, could easily be worth another chance. One who despress better luck than he had here last year is EMBELLISHED who looked certain to be concerned in the firsts of the Thumph Hundle when lightened up and being brought down approaching the last. He's been brought along slowly this season and seems reasonably treated on 10st 128, which makes him 7th better in for being beaster have and sends freights into third by Toteit The Spreador Leopardstown lost time. Penny A Day may have lost his unbesten record but he containly wasn't unbowed with his strong-finishing that to Master Tribe and Black Queen at Leopardstown in January. A 7b pulk with the runner-up, plus the stiller trible here and being able to handle the faster ground, makes hum a denger to ell. The nodec Carifto Briganite has none of a battle on his hands than at Sandown on Saturday and may not even constitution from each found-placed Lady Delay on 7th worse terms.

Selection: \$MBELLISHED

CHELTENHAM

HYPERION 4.30 Certainly Strong (nb) 2.35 WHAT A QUESTION (nap) 5.05 Or Royal 5.40 Embellished 3.55 Cab On Target

GOING: Givel (Good to Firm in places).

Left-hand, galloping course with stiff fences. Uphili run-in of 240yd. New Course.

Course is one nile north of own off Asi35. Bus link from Cheltenham rail station (served by Bristol, Burnlingham and London, Paddington) 2m. ADMISSION: Club \$50; Tattersells \$20; Courage Enclosure § 10. CAR PARK: \$5.

LEADING FESTIVAL TRAINERS WITH RUNNERS; D Nicholson — 6 winners from © runners, gives a success ratio of 10.2% and a base to a \$1 level stake of \$26.00; M Pipe — 6 winners, 125 runners, 4.8%, -\$70.00; E O'Grady — 4 winners, 17 runners, 23.7%, +\$19.50; A L T Moore — 3 winners, 18 runners, 16.7%, +\$3.50.

■ LEADING FESTIVAL JOCKEYS; C F Swan — 9 winners, 55 rides, 16.4%, +\$51.75.

M Dwyer — 5 winners, 17 rides, 17.5% +\$19.00; N Williamson — 4 winners, 19 rides, 11.1%, +\$6.1%, A Magnire — 4 wunters, 28 rides, 14.3%, -\$7.00.

BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Pomme Secret (2.00); Ocean Hawk (2.35); Eboba (4.30);

Siew Man (5.40). WINNERS IN THE LAST SEVEN DAYS: Behmarita (2.40) won at Market Rasen on Fri-dag: Or Boyal (5.65) won here on Tuesday; Caritto Brigante (5.40) won at Sandown on Saturday.

LONG-DISTANCE BUNNERS (FROM WITHIN BRITAIN): Political Tower (4.30) sent 2:0 miles by R Nixon from Eurickbridge End, Borders; Major Bell (5.05) sent 288 miles by A Whilliam from Newmill-on-Stirngt, Borders.

ļΓ	2 00	ELITE RACING CLUB TRIUMPH HURDLE (CLASS	CA
l	2.00	ELITE RACING CLUB TRIUMPH HURDLE (CLASS A) Grade 1) £45,000 added 4YO 2m11 £44,290	
li	47022	CIRCUS STAR (L3) (The Ringmasters) D Nicholson 11 0	D Internal
Ιż	11	COMMANCHE COURT (25) (D F Desmont) T Walsh (h) 11 0	
lŝ	611	DOUBLE AGENT (19) (Herdord Offset Lemtest) J H Johnson 11 0	A Dobbi
Ĭã		EXALTED (21) (Mrs Bryan Jenis) W Jenis 11 0	
13		HAPISET HOUSE (FR) (29) IC A Washboum) R (I'Sullivan 11 0	0.00
۱ã		HAYAAM (26) (Quickstee Racing Partnerstop) A Bailey 11 0	
Ιĩ		MERAWI (19) (BF) (Matt Archer & Mess Jean Broadhurst) N Twiston-Dawes 1	1 Q.C Uzonik
l 8		KINGS WITNESS (USA) (21) Liefrey Horder P Micholis 11 0	
ĺ		L'OPERA (FR) (19) (Sheak) Ahmed Al Makoum; D Nicholson (1 0	
1	0 33	MERAWANG (24) (The Trumph Hopeluls) P Nicholis 11 0	P Hid
Ī		MR WALD (USA) (26) (A D Spence) R Abehurst 11 0	
lī		MUTANASSIB (20) (Malcorn B Jones) M Pipe 11 0	
lı		NO MORE HASSLE (19) (D) (The No Hassle Partnership) Mrs M Reveley 11	
lī	4 0050	PALAMON (USA) (26) (John R White) J White 11 0	T J Morgh
1.	5 263031	PLEASURELAND (10) (Mrs Sydner E M McGarner R Curts 11 0	D Morri
1	6 10	POMBLE SECRET (FR) (30) (D) (BF) (Elite Racing Club) M Pipe 11 0	A P McCoy I
1	7 6033	SEATTLE ALLEY (USA) (5) (1.6 P Partnersho) P Wester 11 ()	
		SERBRUS (USA) (19) (W v & Mrs E S Robins) N Henderson 11 ()	
	9 121	SHOOTING LIGHT (47) (CD) U M Brown) P Murphy 11 0	R Denwood
		STYLISH ALLURE (USA) (11) (P A Bymes) () Weld (M) 11 ()	
	1 3056	WARNING REEF (22) (P Erreny A Steplet A Wilston's Popham) C Popham 11	O.W Marston !
	2 212241	ALWAYS HAPPY (21) (D) (C R Fleet) Mass Gay Mallerray 10 9	T Dascomb
	3 26501	BELMARITA (G) (D) (G A Hubbard) G Hubbard 10 9	Letrael Brenne
	4 115F05	EVRIZA (39) (Bing Gen) Beary) A O'Brien (Inn 10 9	T Horgan I
	5 515411	MARLORETTE (23) U Dorani W Muters (m) 10 9	D J Case
	6 612603	MISS ROBERTO (25) (Mrs T Daton) M Grassi (Mr. 10 9	K F CEN
2		SOCIETY GIRL (38) In G Ueveshin! J O'Shea 10 9	
٦	. 12	WHITE SEA (34) (BF) (T M Hely-Hulchwison) M Pipe 10 9	C F S#8

BETTIME: 4-1 White See, 5-1 L'Opera, 6-1 Shooting Light, 7-1 Rezard, 8-1 Commanche Court, 12-1 Stylish Albure, 14-1 Kings Witness, 18-1 No Wore Hansia, 25-1 Hayeath, 32-1 Circus Star, Harbet House, Maribootin, Miss Roberto, Pomme Sacrat, Servins, 40-1 others 1996: Patory's Resard 1-11 O R Durncooy 10-1 if Marphi 29 can FORM GURDE

1996: Padov's Resum 1.11 O R Durwoody 10-1 if Murphin 29 ran

RERAWI stored what many considered to be a formitious defeat of the prematurely-eased White Sea at Newbury and has since run second to Uropera at Rempton. He gets much more of a stamina test here compared to Kempton and that is a big key to his chance because he made gant sindes to catch Whitia Sea at Newbury. Even so, Charlie Swan was definitely caught napping, having given his mount a breather on the home him. White Sea hurdles with some of Make A Stand's parache and she has a great chance if she stays. She has surprising stamina considering she is a half-easter to the spiriter Humbert's Landing and she biossomed for Paul Cole on the level when put up to 1.2 furlongs offboothing Light by the lengths. Shooting Light, who had one backed run at two for Make Jarvis and was much improved last year when given longer trips, has taken well to hurdling and he was a stylength without more light, who had one backed run at two for Make Jarvis and was much improved last year when given longer trips, has taken well to hurdling and he was a stylength without more feel two company on good to firm ground here on his latest start. He impressed Richard Durwoody that day. Commanche Court would have been the selection in soft ground, but trainer fed Washn is worked by the fast terman. This horse won the Austhran Derby test June and the form actually had some ment. The second subsequently an timd in a Grade One race in the USA and the truch had previously won a Lister size of the relation to two good wins over timber in February, but the ground was bottomless when he with at Purchastown last time. L'Opera had we are hurdles on fee leases he may at a thromphoil denam to too good wars over amore in February, but the ground wes bodomess when he won at Punchesiown last time. I Opera had two and a helf lengths to spare over Kerawa at Kemp-ion and could be a class act. One race over hundles so far leeves him at a theoretical de-one-mage. Dut his Flat form included a good third in a 14-furione handscap at Trake in August when he was giving 12th to the year-older Theatreworld (fourth). Kings Witmoss was a de-cent sort on the level and trotted up at Huntingdon after starting with a Folkestone fourth to Shadow Leader.

2.35 BONUSPRINT STAYERS' HURDLE (CLASS A) (Grade 1) £75,000 added 3m 110yds £53,440

OCEAN HAWK acts on the ground and will stay the trip. It can pay to forgive him a below-par ruln at Kempton last time. The fitting of blarkers can help him burn off the opposition as he did in winning the Long Walk Hurdle (Accord and the Premier Long Distance Hurdle (Mandrel). The Kempton As no our management of the process of the winner. Pharanear, and so the process (haydool.). The Kempton form has been boosted by the winner. Pharanear, and so the process horses, Conquering Leader and Escartefigue, who might have prevaled with a better run, must enter calculations. Escartefigue is 4th better in with Nick Henderson's mare, but has it to prove on ground it is fast. Karshil, an unfactly looking third to Unitended in the 2m St Sun Alkance Novice Hurdle here last year, races keenly and may not stay, while Unitance, another with suspect stamma, will, at least, relish the going. The nine-year-old mare What A Question will cope with the ground and must enter calculations. She had fraingfort among Selections OCEAN HAWK

3.55 CHRISTIES FOXHUNTER CHASE CHALLENGE CUP (CLASS B) £25,000 added 3m 2f 110yds £19,868		
1 14P2-11 CAB ON TURGET (27) (IN Hurst) Mrs M Reade, 11 12 ()		
2 F-142/2-P CELTIC ABBEY (XL) (BF) (G J Powel) Mrs Christine Hardings 9 12 0		
3 22P-3 CLOBRACKEN LAD (13) (T J Swaffeld) Mrs J Swaffeld 9 12 0		
4 0060/- CLONROSH SLAVE (LIGSS) (Robert Tyrier Robert Robe		
5 1F21-P3 COLONIAL NELLY (14) (Coolered Coving Racing) Mrs D Grossel 9 12 0		
6 42P-1 COPPER THESTLE (S) (R S Hummsett) N Pomiet 9 12 0		
7 35/121-1 DOUBLE SILK (35) (CD) (R C Wilers: R Wilers 13 12 0		
8 21F2:1/- FANTUS (728) (CD) (J A KegNay R Barber 10 12 0		
9 1511-U1 HOLLAND HOUSE (15) (C) (E Wight) P Charange 11 12 0		
10 PP6-212 LORD RELIC (NZ) (12) (BF) (Mrs H J Carte) S Brookshaw 11 12 0		
11 RU112P MR GOLIGHTLY (295) (Mrs 8 Cooden) Mrs S Cooden 10 12 0		
12 1133-34 MY NOMBREE (20) (C) (D E Nichols) D Nichols 9 12 0		
13 1/2353- STILL IN BUSINESS (210) (R G Wilders; R Barber 9 12 0lifes P Carlog		
14 U-3 TEARWAY KING 198 (Mrs Norean Mollianus) Enda Bolear (M) 7 12 0		
15 //5/11-1 THE JOGGER (20) (Mrs P Tgrand) C Tgrand 12 12 0		
16 U.S. 1FP-1 WHAT A HAND (39) IF A Boyson E O'Gracy (In) 9 12 ()Mr P Feeton		
17 11F64-4 FINAL PRIDE (267) 089 (Grahame Barrett) Mrs C Hazann 11 11 9		
18 1F-12 MSS MILLEROOK (12) () T Goldsworthy D Goldsworthy 9 11 9		
- 18 deciared -		
BETTENS: 7-2 Cab On Target, 11-2 Tenraway King, 6-1 What A Hand, 7-1 Fantus, 8-1 Double Silk.		
10-1 Holland House, 12-1 Cettic Abbey, The Jostfer, 14-1 Lord Relie, 20-1 Miles Millbrook, Nr Go-		

FORM GUIDE

CAB ON TARGET is unbeaten in hunter crases this year and gives the impression he retains a good deal of ability. What A Hand has been in form in Ireland white Still to Bustiness is a winner between the flags but less diffective under Rules and held by Tille Jogger at Wincardon less session. Teeraway Yillig represents lest year's successful stable and has recent winning form in irish point-to-points. Yet any surprise could come from Cettlic Abbey, who came back strongly in two runs last year only to make mistakes in the must at Hereford on his reappearance in the race won by Miles Militbrook. Selection: CAB ON TARGET

Oli 123 - Supplied and all and 124 -		
2	1.30	CHELTENHAM GRAND ANNUAL HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS B) £35,000 added 2m 110yds Penalty value £28,679
1	03-31F2	DANCING PADDY (33) (CD) (Bychanox Razing) is Currengham-Brown 9 12 0
Ž	15-0254	NEERFET (40) (CD) (Mrs Al Emery) P Hobbs 10 11 9
3		UNICLE ERREE (19) (D) (Lac) Lloyd Welther J Fracerald 12 11 4G Bondley
4	6-20422	EASTHORPE (33) (CO) (Maxim Broughtom Mass H Kongr 9 11 3 F Tilley
5	0/211-1F	CERTAINLY STRONG (27) (D) (EF) (Nex Sector.) D Netrobon 7 11 1
6	5224-43	TIME WON'T WAIT (47) (D) (BF) (Old Berks Partressics) R Phillips 8 11 1 Relition
7		MESTER COOPY (12) (CD) (RF) (Mrs R M Half J Here 11 11 0 J Codeby
8	30351-P	CABLE SEACH (25) (D) (Hero M Storte,) Michael Currengham (n) 8 10 11
9	113531	POLITICAL TOWER (14) (D) (G R S Nation) R Nation 10 10 11 (350)
10	136777	ELZOSA (FR) (Z4) (D) (D A Johnson) M Page 5 10 8A P McCoy B
11	1/1311-0	STURM FALCON (USA) (35) (CD) (E R Darby) S Mado: 7 10 2Cris Webb (5)
12		SUPER CORN (34) (D) (George Brookes) R Let 9 10 1
13	332112	SCORE 90Y (42) (D) (R V Steel R Share (M) 9 10 1 I P Broderick
14		GAROLO (FR) (28) (D) (Lac) Lloyd Webber) C Brooks 7 (D D
15		PERIOWAPP (25) (D) MAIS Seamus Purceill & Martin Ital 10 10 0C F Sman
		HORSE PAIDER (36) (D) (BP) (Peter Five) M Proe 7 to 0C Mande
		- 16 declared -
Manager market 1/44 Ton American middle Comits Oct 17th Daylors Co. 44th Street Daylor Dr. 7th		

Minimum weight 10:1. The handing weights Gardi 9st 12th, Pennang 9st 11th, Nove Rader 9st 7th, BETIMIC 4-1 Certainly Strong, 11-2 Ehrobe, 13-2 Time Word, Whit, 9-1 Easthorpe, 10-1 Strong, 12-1 Khroel, Soper Cola, 14-1 Mister Oddy, 16-1 Cable Beach, Duncing Paddy, Political Tower, Scoble Boy, 20-1 Perhaspp, Unic Emile, 25-1 Mores Rider, 33-1 Storm Falcon 1996; Kibnet 9 10 12 A P McCoy 7-1 (P J Hobbs) 13 ran

هكذا من الأصل

Venables' troops survive perilous mission to Macedonia

ables picked up a nice, uncomplicated earner in the sun coaching Australia had not month, invited the Australians reckoned on the job taking him

The Balkan country, surrounded by Greece, Albania, Bulgaria and Serbia, yesterday hosted Venables' first match with his been a low-key friendly was soon Australian team in Europe. The former England coach had sought an international to test his Macedonian government. The foreign-based squad, several of trouble started when the Footwhom play with British clubs.

Macedonia, who entertain the Republic of Ireland in a 100 miles south of Skopje to the World Cup qualifier next city of Bitola, apparently to apand their famous coach for a game here in the capital, Skopje, a city of a million people set amid snow-capped mountains.

However, what should have overshadowed by off-field problems that even involved the hall Union of Macedonia (FUM)

pease fans in that remote region.

A perturbed Venables had the venue checked out, and he was told it was unfit to stage an international because of the poor pitch, lack of any changing rooms and no spectator scating. Australia threatened to cancel the game unless it was moved back to Skopje. Venables contacted Macedonia's embassy in Loudon, which became inSteve Connolly reports from Skopje on a Balkan ordeal for Australia's footballers

volved in persuading its football authorities to back down.

Although the match was saved, administrators from both sides found other sources of dispute. The most pronounced was an argument about television rights, which Soccer Australia (the game's governing body there), had already sold only to be told by the FUM that

it wanted to sell these rights direct to Australian broadcasters planning to show the game live. Soccer Australia's chief executive. David Hill, threatened to lodge a complaint with Fifa. world football's governing body. because of the Macedonians' showed up in Skopje.

conduct over the television The players were not spared

Moore, missed a connecting flight from London because of fog and had to drop out. George Kulscar, who has just joined Bradford City from Antwerp, caught the plane in time but three suitcases full of possessions he was moving to Yorkshire from Belgium never

Soccer Australia had risked offending Australia's vast Greek community just by coming to

Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia because the Greeks claim ownership of the name of Macedonia, Soccer Australia is also not overly popular with the 300,000 Macedonians living Down Under" after their football clubs became casualties of official policy to de-ethnicise the

national league. Despite the aggravation surrounding this game. Venables was charming to his hosts and

their share of misadventures.

Macedonia, which is known in Still focused on preparing his the football world as the Former players, who believe his knowhow can help take Australia to the World Cup finals for the first time since 1974.

This troubled trip was made worthwhile when an uneventful game - watched by only 15,000 spectators - was decided by an 89th-minute header from the Australian captain Aurelio Vidmar, who plays for Tenerife. The 1-0 win gave Venables four victories from as many starts. Next stop: Hungary on 2 April.

Leicester surpass **own** expectations

Simon Grayson yesterday looked ahead to Leicester's Coca-Cola Cup final appearance at Wembley following Tuesday's semi-final victory over Wimbledon and recalled how he written off before the season thought his season was over just

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seven weeks ago. The defender was the victim of a late tackle in the final minute of Leicester's fifth round win at Ipswich which left his leg sliced open and his ankle with serious ligament damage.

as bad as he or Martin O'Neill, his manager, originally feared, and now Grayson feels more able to forgive and forget.

"At the time I really thought I wouldn't play again this season, said Grayson. It was a really bad one and I feared the worst. I still can't believe he work and a good team spirit, but [Richard Naylor of Ipswich] wasn't sent off for it, but hickily it wasn't as serious as we all thought. In fact I was back af- to belief." ter one game and I have thoroughly enjoyed everything since

But while the hotly disputed May and what looks like Prepenalty which knocked them out. of the FA Cup has clearly worked as a motivator, the 27year-old suggested that being even started had been an even

bigger factor in their success.
"I don't think anybody outside the club would have believed we could do as well as we have," Grayson said.

"When we went up to Sunderland for the first Premiership However, the injury was not game we were picking up the papers and reading that everyone was saying we were certainties to go down.

"All that did was give us the determination and desire to prove everybody wrong - and that's what's happened. Of work and a good team spirit, but if we're honest we've probably surpassed what even we thought we could achieve. That's down

After their victory over Wim-bledon at Selhurst Park on - everything except Chelsea, of - Thesday night, which followed course."

Thesday night, which followed on from play-off success last

Liverpool make move for Citko

The future of Stan Collymore at fused to comment, met with the if Roy Evans' attempts to sign the Polish international Marek a letter from the FA imploring Citko bear fruit. The Liverpool manager has set up a £2.5m deal for the 22-year-old Widzew Lodz striker, who is due to ar-

rive in Liverpool today for talks. The developments come a Les Ferdinand will miss New-month after Criko turned down castle's Uefa Cup quarter-final Blackburn Rovers, saying he wanted to stay in Poland and become a priest. Instead, it seems, his vocation may lie at Anfield.

Nottingham Forest have taken their spending to £5.5m in the space of 72 hours with the £1m signing of the striker Ian Moore from Transpere Rovers. It follows the arrival on Monday at the City Ground of Celtic's Pierre van Hooijdonk for £4.5m

Moore, the son of the former Tranmere player Ronnie Moore, shot to prominence last season when he scored in five successive League games. He has five Eng-land Under-21 caps. A deal has been struck be-

ween Brighton's co-owners Bill
Archer and Greg Stanley and the
prospective buyers of the Third
Division club, led by Brightonhorn businessman Dick Knight. Details of the deal have been

held up for legal consideration.

Peter Schmeichel is set for another round of talks with his legal team before stating whether stitute following a back injury.

he is prepared to heal his rift with Ian Wright. The Manchester United goalkeeper, who has reyesterday after the publication of both players to make up.

West Ham's Welsh international defender Mark Bowen is to join Ossie Ardiles's Japanese side, Shimizu-S-Pulse, for £1m. Les Ferdinand will miss New-

second leg tie in Monaco next Thesday after aggravating a ham-string strain in Newcastle's 4-3 defeat by Liverpool on Monday. Bournemouth are nearer to

closure after their major creditor, Lloyds Bank, rejected a takeover bid of more than £1m from a consortium of supporters and local businesses. Lincoln's Terry Fleming has

been banned for three matches after giving a team-mate's name to avoid being sent off. Fleming gave the name of Tony Dennis to referee Paul Taylor when he was shown the yellow card for the second time, and stayed on the pitch during the Third Division

match against Wigan last mouth. Coventry's manager, Gordon Strachan, and the winger John Salako have resolved their dif-ferences. Strachan angered Salako by replacing him 20 minntes into his comeback against Leicester at the weekend, when he came on as a half-time sub-

to recall that the architect of the success was a hunted and haunt-

ed man less than a year ago.
Following a 2-0 home defeat
by Sheffield United on 30 March, angry Leicester fans barricaded Filbert Street demanding action.

But instead of ignoring them, Grayson recalled how O'Neill accepted the challenge. "The fans weren't happy with the situation, and I think most managers would have just ignored it all," he said.

"But he invited them into to his office to talk things over and explain to them, and the attitude he showed there has carried us through to where we are now.

"Now we're just 90 minutes from Europe, and even the very thought of that is an amazing prospect, something we can barely imagine. It's going to be a great day out at Wembley and if it goes right it will go down as one hell of a season."

Meanwhile, Wimbledon's Robbie Earle is determined to bounce back from Tuesday's defeat and make amends by winning the FA Cup.
The Dons were on course to

complete their double Wembley bid after Marcus Gayle's spectacular strike gave them a first-half lead against Leicester - until Grayson's equaliser sent Leicester through on the awaygoal rule.

"We were desperately disappointed we did not achieve what we set out to do," Earle it because we still have a lot to play for. I was very emotional because I knew we were so close but I consoled myself with the fact that we could put it right in

the FA Cup."
Wimbledon are still heading for Europe on two fronts with a Uefa Cup place beckoning in the Premiership – or a place in next season's European Cup-Winners' Cup a possibility if they reach Wembley by beating Chelsea at Highbury in April's FA Cup semi-final.

"We hoped to face Chelsea in the cup final but will be well psyched up for the game. I think we have the advantage because we have a good record against them and beat them 4-2 earlier in the season. Last night's defeat will only spur us on. We know we are a good side and we refuse to let this season taper out."

Not only Europe, but Eng-land is also clearly on Earle's mind and he is eager to impress Glenn Hoddle, the national coach.

"I had a taste of international football on the standby side and it only made me want more," he said. "I am having the season of my life and desperately want to be involved. I know I'll get the iob done."



Cadete's promise to Celtic fans

Jorge Cadete leaned heavily on his popularity with Celtic's lans when he made a public apnearance at the opening of a shop yesterday in the wake of Tuesday's 2-0 defeat at Kilmarmock. The Portuguese international told supporters: We owe it to you to beat

Rangers again."
It would be an understatement to describe that defeat against a team struggling to stay clear of relegation as a disappointment for a side who are desperately trying to stop their Glasgow rivals from matching their record of nine successive championship titles.

"It was just one of those games which has no explanation." Cadete said, "You want and need to win but end up losing. Even when Peter Grant and I both hit the crossbar in the first half I didn't give up hope.

"If you hit the bar in the first minute of a match and think it will not be your day, why bother playing the other 89? We were 1-0 down for 75 minutes at Rugby Park earlier this season but won 3-1, and I kept hoping we could do that again."

Paolo Di Canio was sorely missed by Celtic after the Italian helped inspire last Thursday's Tennents Scottish Cup quarter-final victory over Rangers at Parkhead. "You always miss quality players like Paolo, but injuries happen to every team." Cadete said.

The striker wants Celtic to make it up to their fans by repeating the cup success over again in the League at Parkhead on Sunday, to keep their title hopes alive. We must forget the Kil-

marnock game. We can't change it. We've one game to think about, which is Sunday's, and the fans deserve to see another win over Rangers," he said.

Di Canio is still rated doubtful for Sunday with the hamstring injury which forced him off at half-time after scoring a penal-

ty against Rangers last week. Celtic will open contract talks this afternoon with three players who could walk out of Park-

head for nothing this summer. Tosh McKinlay, Peter Grant and Malky Mackay will all be out of contract at the end of the scason. Raymond Sparkes, their agent, will open discussions on

their future with Celtic's financial director, Eric Riley, Any foreign clubs who want to sign Mackay and McKinlay for nothing when their deals run out will be watching with interest.

There are options other than Celtic open to the players and this is just the first stage of talks." Sparkes said."1 can t speculate on how they might go. It is an initial chat and we will take it from there.

Weale leads Wales to famous win

Wales, who are attempting to bridge a 16-year gap since their last home international indoor championship, made an excelient start in Ballymoney yesterday when they beat the defending champions, Scotland.

The Septs, chasing a record seventh successive ride, forged into a 60-57 halfway lead, but Wales then recovered and moved 95-78 ahead with 15 of the scheduled 21 ends completed. The Scots rallied over the last quarter, but Wales held on for their eight-shot victory.

"I am disappointed but not despondent - we can still win it." the Scottish team-manager. John Shinmers, said.

The toget of the Welsh camp was Robert Weale, who guided his disk to a crushing a 32-10 win over Robert Provan. John Price added a 21-15 win against Richard Corsie and Jason Greenslade edged out Graham Robertson 21-19.

Backstainten YOURX ALL ENGLAND CHANDY CRESHIPS (NEC., Brindingham): Micris second round: P-5 Hoyer Laws (Den)-bit X Yangchan (Den) 15-2 15-8; Pang Chen (Mindys hit Hourt to S Kort 15-1 16-15 15-8; B Sarmos (Inden) bit Sogisard (Den) 15-5 15-12 M Lundyses Harens (Den) bit Den 16-16 15-15 15-12 M Lundyses Harens (Den) 15-10 15-5: I Lichterson (See) bit C Houghton (Eng) 15-8 15-2; Ding Long (Dhi ti K Jonassen (Den) 15-10 15-3: I Lichterson (See) bit K Jonassen (Den) 15-9 15-2; Ding Long (Chi ti K Jonassen (Den) 15-9 15-1; Lin Lewen (Ch) bit K Jonassen (Den) 15-9 15-1; Ding Long (Chi ti K Jonassen (Den) 15-9 15-1; Ding Long (Chi ti K Jonassen (Den) 15-5 15-6; Salm (Inden) It A Bossen (Den) 15-5 15-5; Salm (Inden) It A Bossen (Den) 15-5 15-5; Salm (Inden) bit V Duschderico 8-15 15-11 18-14; Ungerg (Ch) bit J Olssen 15-8 15-5; HARD (Inden) bit S Archer and J Whight (Eng) 15-2; Sale J Long It S Archer and J Whight (Eng) 15-12 15-5; J We and L La (Ch) bit M Womensk and V Ester-

INTERNATIONAL FREENOLY (Skepjej: Macodo-ca O Australe (A vidner 69), EUROPEAN UNDER-21 CHAMPIONISME Group Three (Paul): France 1 (Venty 68) Swizerland O.

ANON INSURANCE CONSUNCTION First Division: Charter 2 Southernation 0; Swedon 0 Horseth 1.

COCA-COLA CUP Somi-final second log: Win-tedon 1 (Sayle 23) Lanester 1 (Crayen 53) (af-ter ecre time. ogstrighte 1-1; Leicetter win on

is earn time. aggraphs 3-2; 1900ses with on analygoods.

FA CARLINE PREMIERSHEP, Blacksum 1 (Salischer 64; Nachrighem Forest 2 (Haband 18).

MAZIONAMER FORESKI, LEAGUE Flast Division: Barrings on 2 (Facing one 51, Francis 69) Manchester Cay 0. Second Divisions Boursmouth 3; Francier 40. Recision Christian 61) Christian 60, Resistant 61) Christian 60, Resistant 61) Christian 60, Resistant 61) Christian 61, Resistant 61, Resistant 61, Resistant 62, Manchester 41, Baggers 88; Scattorough 1 Recision 622; Autro Winnessense 74, Baggers 88; Scattorough 1 Autro Winnessense 74, Baggers 88; Scattorough 1 Autro Winnessense 74, Baggers 88; Scattorough 1 Autro Winnessense 75.

AUTO WINDSCREENS SHIELD Southern Area fine first log. Post-brough 2 (Otto 14, Charlery 35) Cortestor O.
SELL'S SOUTHSM LEAGUE Premier Divisions learnmoch 2 (Wags 24, Burle 73 Cabu C. Fiest Division: Fallor 1 (10wr 76) IS Waren 1 (Vertag 37). Second Division: Cyde 2 (O'Wei 68, Arrang 73) Queen of the South 1 (Bryce 86).

Yesterday

Tuesday

riseation (Belo) 15-4 15-4; J Enksen and M Thom-sen (Den) to N Porting and J Bredbury (Engl 18-13 6-1 (ret); C Xingdon and G Jun (Ch) to H Tee-Name (Not) 15-12 9-15-15-11; Z Zuev and M Yalushpan (Rus) to C Seeptup and B Ander-sen (Den) 15-5-15-9; C Hart and D Nelbug (Engl In T Zeopaing and O Hong (Ch) 18-16-15-5; L Yong and G Fei (Ch) to C Islances and M Vange (Den) 15-1-15-6; M Segend and R Olsen (Den) by J Robertson and L Cole (Engl 15-9-15-5. Basketball

MERIC Change 117 Boston 105; Atlanta 106 Urah 99; Changom 98 Vancouver 92; Minnesora 104 Philadalphia 100; Houston 103 San Antonio 79; Delas 91; New York 53; Marmi 108 Malacules 93; Critardo 96 Denvier 91; Toronto 105 Phoena 101; Pontant 109 IA Calopera 105; Seattle 93 Detroit 80; Cleveland 88 Secremento 85.

Mark Taylor, the Australian captain, has recovered from a back injury and will be fit to lead his country in the second HOME INTERNATIONAL INDOOR CHAMP-IONSHIPS (Ballymoney): Wales IX Scotland

noon local time.

FOOTBALL RESULTS

120-112 (Weish slops (inst):) Price bit R Corse 21-15; M Anarcy lost to R McCurloch 15-23; R Weels bit R Provan 38-10; N Leigh lost to W Wood 11-25; S Rees lost to J Mult 14-20; J Greenslade bit G Robertson 21-19.

The purse-bid deadline for Lennox Lewis's World Boong Council heavy-weight tritle defence against Henry Ak-towarde has been changed for a third urne. Offers for the all-British bout will now be opened on 1 April in Mexico at recon level time.

C; Sufton Coldifield of Paget Rangers (J. Southem Divisions Reat () Newbort (low) 4; Tombridge
O Mangate O; Waterlookle 1 Trowtonige 3, Dr
Marters League Cop Semi-final account legBurton 4 Racing Gub Warwet 1 (1989 S. 3); Weymouth 0 Surbury Town 3 (agg 0 49);
MTERLEMI EDPRÉSS MEDIAND AUTHORS Balenal 1 Bridgmorth 2; Chasetown () Soldmare St
Michaels C; Hanciley Annety 4 Persince 2; Pelsay Villa 1 Rushall Olympie 1; Rocuster 4 Williamhad 3; Sandwell Borough 1 Bloowch 1, Shrinai OMayorsely Victore O.

Agwelon EASTERN LEAGUE Prenuer Division:
Falenham 2 March O; Hadfeigh 1 Woochmidg 3;
Newmarket 1 Wilscent 1, Stoemarket () Harwerh
& Parhasson 3; Worpon 1 Sohem 2 (abandoned
&Limin'; Wroshern 3 Haistead 1.

JEWSON WESSEX LEAGUE: Berneron Hearth 1

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Gav MADOMAIL COMPENENCE: Bromagnia O Nacistransia 1: Dower 1 Storenage 1 (Stendana) for the Indiana. Ing; Huyen O Fembourgi O: Notinering 3 Alphancham 1: Wolang 2 Welling 1.

ICES (EAGLE Presider Division: Dutrich O Entel 1: Hendon 1 Yound 3; Younding 3: Beston; Storrford O. Finat Division: Bifferios 2 Condon O; Chesham 4 Toding at Manthem 2: Courty Island O; Hisylaiserie 3 Benhammare 2. Second Division: One-hant 5: Migrow Cr. Walton 8. Herstons 2. Second Division: Chesham O Coller Row & Romford 1: Dorburg O Egisen 2: Ediguard 1 Windoor & Eton 1: Horstons 1 Metropolar Poice 1; Hungarton 1: Wordoor O: Egisen 2: Ediguard 1: Windoor & Eton 1: Wordoor 2: Leadherhead 8 Persident 1: Titouy O Bensised O. Third Division: Capacita 1: Economics Cop seemi-Basins second legs Borchom Wood 3 Kingstonian 2 (sect. egg 4-3); Sulton Urd 1: Basintee 2 ksg 1-31.

CHEMONO LEMENTE Premier Division: Lancaster Cop 2 Wisson Albon 1; Marine 2 Whiston Urd C. Chotey 1: Barbor Stage 3: Capacitage O Basins O Audidand O, Finat Division: Legit Nat. 2 Ess. Wood Town O; Wentington Town 3 Gertin 1. President's Cap second-round replay: Workson 1: Register Schaps 2: Lassender Cop Chellenham 0; Hastong Division: Atmaster O. Middianal Division: Stepanad O, Parather O, Middianal Division: Stepanad O, Parather JEWSON WESSEX LEAGUE: Bernemon Heath 1 Windows O; Thatchorn 2 Whitehorch 3. Windome O; Thetonom 2 Wheehurch 3. FEDERATION BREWERY MORTHERN LEAGUE FIRST DWISION: Tow Law 1 Beatingson Terrers 3; Whitby 4 Easington 2. NORTH WEST COUNTIES LEAGUE First Divisions Attractor Columns 2 Blackcood Rovers 4: Blooke O Newcestle Town 3; Bussough 1 Salvod 0; Sos-sio 1 Trafford 2; Hollier Od Boys 3 Chardenton 4; Merier Road 2 Mosgrove 3. NORTHERN COUNTIES EAST LEAGUE Premier Divisions Marthy 1 Trackey 2; North Ferrity 3 Os-sat 1 John 0.

SCREWEN DIRECT LEAGUE Premier Divisions Pauton D Oxo Down G.

URLSPORT UNITED GOUNTIES LENGUE Premier Division Stamford 3 Speking 2: Wootton 2 Long Buckly 2. UNITET SUSSEX COUNTY LEAGUE John O'HERE League Cup semi-finals Burgest Hill 2 Sokey 0. WRISTONE EAD NENT LEAGUE. Counting 1 2 State Green 3: Faversharn 3 Coty 2: Hythe 3 Greenwich 0: Turbridge Wells 3 Lordswood 3. LEAGUE OF WALES: Born 8 Applyshyth 1: Holvert 3 Connah's Quo, Nomads 4, Gabert League Cup semi-final first leg: Bangor Cay 1 Unisantifical 1.

Preston have signed Kurt Nogan, the Burnley striker, for £150,000. Depend-

The Leicester goalkeeper, Kasey Keller, consoles Robbie Earle at Selhurst Park on Tuesday

Test against South Africa beginning in Port Elizabeth tornorrow,

Wickramasinglie, who will return home. England's third Test against Australia at Old Trafford from 3 to 8 July has passed

the £1m mark in ticket sales.
ond day is virtually sold out.

Football

SPORTING DIGEST

Unicardinal 1.
PORTINS LERGIJE First Division: Coverty 2 Port.
Vale 2. Second Division: Rotherham 3 York 1.
ANON INSURANCE COMBINATION First Division: Crystal Pelece 2 Brighton 1.
SA YOUTH CUP Fifth-round replay: Transfer Rouer 0 Leeds Urd 1. Rivers O Leeds Utd 1.

GERMAN LEAGUE Harsstuhe 2 (Harpstow 9.
Studenth 35: Bectum 3 (Mode 2. Pre. 47.) Control
57): Werder Bremen 2 (Schez 18. Schotz 51)
51: Pauls 1 (Brand 37): Hemburg 2 (Scherards15.) (19. Brousses Menchengladusch 1 (Jupeau
60): Scheite 04 4 (Anderburge 4. Held 68, Max.
13. Bromering og 90) Dusburg 0: Cologne 1
(Sternman 20) vill Struggart 5 (Bobz 21, 33.
66. (Ber 55. Laucs 69).

DUTCH CUP Quarter-finel: Znote () Rose JC Nest-

ing on appearances, Nogan's former club could also receive a further £25,000 for the 25-year-old, who sorred 27 goals last season for Burnley. David Webb, the Brentford manager, has confirmed he still intends to leave the Third Descript leading after handing in The all-rounders, Ruwan Kalpage and Upul Chandana, are to join the Sri Lan-ka squad in New Zealand for the three one-day internationals starting on 22 March. The two players will replace the batsman Dufeep Samaraweera and the fast-medium pace bowler Pramodya Match medium pace bowler Pramodya

Third Division leaders after handing in a resignation letter following the de at Preston on Saturday. However, as the chairman. Martin Lange, is present ly in the United States, the contents of the letter will not be disclosed.

Jose Mana Olazabai so impressed in his first tournament for almost 18 months two weeks ago when he finished joint 12th in the Dubal Desert Classic that he has been made favourite by the bookmakers, William Hill, for this week's Por-

Husky racing Martin Buser won his third Iditated Trail Race yesterday when he was first to the finish at Nome, Alaska, in a time of 9 days 8r 30mm, Buser, of Bg Lake, Alas-ka, employed a 10-dog team to laush 90 minutes shead of the 1995 champ-

ion, Doug Swingley. ice hockey SUPERLEAGUE Play-offs: Group A: Coroff Devis 6 Newcastie Cobras 4. Broup B: Northigham Partitles, 4 Basingstove Bison 3. GROUP A

Photograph: Reuter

Processor 2 (at), \$1 Louis 4 San Jose 3

Pools dividends

ITHEWOODS: Treble chance: 23pts not won.
22pts 155,603 \$0. 21pts 1274,801. 22pts
121 45, 13pts 17 60, Half-time results 17 pts
mar. £10.70, Four draws. £20.90 10 homes:
43 65, Five swaps: £7,537

VENNORS: Treble chance: 23pts £251,741 00
22pts £1,313.45, 22pts £279,20. Super
states: £19 80, Premier 10: £8 05.

ETTERS: Treble chance: 23pts £25,435,30.
22pts £557,85. 24pts £22,49, 20pts £2.70.
Eight awayer. No manname: 23pts £35,50 senters.
22pts £131,30. 21pts £3,15. 20pts 455, Four
draws mothers barner: £200,86. Eight homes
inoversignamed: 80n, Four awayer £480.30. Super
states: Treble chance: 22pts £2,016.15.

BRITTENS: Troble Chance: 23gts 12,016.15. 22gts 159.30. 21gts 116.95. Four draws: 186.25 Five aways: [48] Eight homes: 60p. Rugby Union

Charise Mulrame, the Gloucester scrum-half, will be out of action for the rest of the season because of a pelvic bone

Of the Sussession of Sussess

Skiing ALPHE WORLD CUP (Val., Coloredo): Women's downhill: 1 P Wolling: (See: 1 mm. 43, 265ec; 2 m K Scenge: (See: R Gotsch / Aut) 1:43, 31: 41 Mostre: (In. 1):43,61: 6 M Zurungen: (Sem)

Snooker

Jim Chambers, the coach, and the former world billiards champion, Mark Wild-man, who chairs the billiards committee. have been co-opted to the board of the World Professional Billiards and Snook-er Association.

BY ASSECTATION (Banglook) Second round: S HANDOPEN (Banglook) Second round: S HANDOPEN (BIS) STATE (BIS) SECOND (BIS) NY DOCTORY (BIS) STATE (BIS) NY BOCTORY (BIS) STATE (BIS) NY BOCTORY (BIS)

Sumo
Spring Grand Tottronament (Osaka, Japan) Fourth day: Coyoro twon 2, tos 2-bit Ogmshist (2-2): Ogma-12-1, to Misughato (2-3): Hamanochima (2-2): Ogma-13-1, Shikamatolima (2-1): Dr. Hamanochima (2-2): Shikamatolima (2-1): Tottnowaka (3-1): Shikamatolima (2-2): Tottnowaka (3-1): Shikamatolima (2-2): Tottnowaka (3-1): Shikamatolima (2-2): Tottnowaka (3-1): Shikamatolima (2-2): Shikamatolima (2-2): Shikamatolima (3-1): Shikam

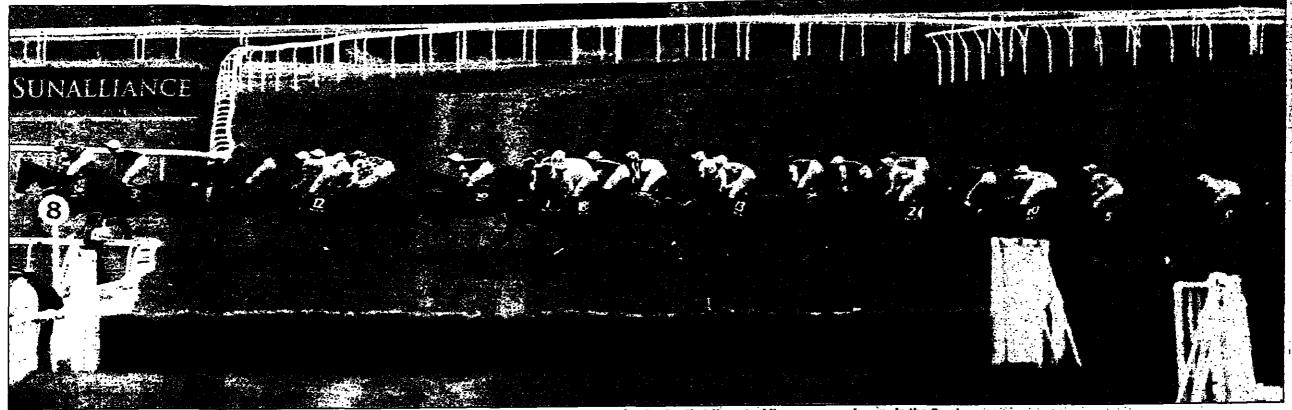
COPENHAGEN MEN'S OPEN Singles, first round: F Dewull (Bel) bl EANarez (Sp. 6-1 6-1 G Roour (Fn b) B Steven (N.) 6-4 7-5: L Burgsmüller (Gen b) S Smann (Fn 6-3 6-2: F Samonn (Fn b) P Frednisson (Swe 6-1 6-3: K Carssen (Den' b) T Larsen (Dem' 6-1 6-3: A Volleve (Rus) tot A Diovasily (Rus) 6-4 7-6; M Damm (C. Rep) b) P Languard: (Den 6-2 6-3.

IDEN 6-2-6-3.
MEN'S CHAMPIONS CUP (Indian Wells, Carli) Singles, first round: B Black (Zmi 1: A Costa (Spi 6-2-6-2: M Philippousse (Aus. 1: A Agess (US) 7-6-7-6: M Rosser (Swin D: L. Zabates (Ag) 6-3-7-5: 1 Novak (C Rep. 1: A Costa (Ben 5-7-6-4-6-2: B Ulmmoch (C Rep. 1: A Costa (B Rep. 1: A Costnet (Gen 5-7 6-4 6-2) B Unmoch (12 Rep bt H Gumy (Arg) 4-6 6-1 6-0; C Weedurf (US-bt I Gmestach (US-6-4 6-7 6-3) I Bectuman (Sme) bt A Gaudenz (Rt 6-1 6-3; I Sunche: Sph Bt R Reneberg (US-6-4 5-7 6-4; Shu-stat (2 Rep) bt P Hamitus (Rem 6-7 6-7 6-1; Second round: M Chang (US) bt S Schalled: (Nath) 6-4 6-3; M Larsson (Sme) bt 1/2 Ros (Chie) 6-3 5-7 7-6; G Ruemen (Bra) bt W Formers (SA) 7-6 1-6 6-3; I Muster (Au) bt A vonce (Rom) 6-2 6-4.

WOMEN'S EMERT CLIP (Inclien Wells, Califfic Singles, third round: 1 Datempor: US) bt R Dagorner (Rom) 6-2 6-1; V Wilhams (US) bt I Majok (Cros) 7-5 3-6 7-5; M J Fernance: US) bt R Dagorner (Rom) 6-2 6-3; C Mortinez (Sp.)



'It's time to watch the fellahs in the big hats



A day at the races: The punters (right) apply their own favoured systems to the race card at Cheltenham yesterday, hoping that they can hit upon some winners. In the Coral Cup Handicap Hurdle (above) they were looking for Big Strand, which got up on the line to pip his Martin Pipe stable-mate, Allegation Photographs: David Ashdown

Deep in the heart of the Arkle ments. Around 5,000 Irishmen Bar, Finbar isn't sure where he make the annual pilgrimage to is. "I can't remember if I'm at a funeral, off sick or what," he

says. "It'll come back to me." The one place he won't be is out on the rails, where a prying television camera might betray him to his employers. "We'll be here all meeting," says Finbar of the handy spot a length and a half from the bar.

Finbar and his friends. Pat and John (some names have been changed to protect the guilty of conscience), are from County Cork and part of what may be the most benign exodus in the history of a country that

Cheltenham, and few leave disappointed. Tve been coming 20 years

and it gets better every year." Pat says. "There's a buzz about the place we can't resist. "It's the best National Hunt there is," Finhar adds. "They go at a terrific lick. There are no tactics here. Nobody avoids Cheltenham.

Even a local inflation rate that would put Kenneth Clarke out of a job is greeted with tolerance. "I don't know that the money really matters. We know the prices are up this week. We'd do the same ourselves," Pat says.

Matt Tench spends a day among the many Irishmen who make an annual pilgrimage to the Cheltenham Festival

but no chance of the distaff side being invited to join the party
"What we do is ring them up in the evening and say our backs are hurting, and we're not enjoying it, and how we miss them," Finbar says.

The Festival began badly for the Irish, with the nation which produced seven successes last year emerging winnerless from the opening day's hostilities. In common with most of their

countrymen, Finbar, Pat and There is much talk of wives

John were nursing their bruises before yesterday's first race. "I think we could see some strokes pulled today. It's time to watch the fellahs in the big hats," Finbar says. Just then J P McManus, own-

er of Istabraq - the Irish banker of the meeting, appears on a TV screen. "And there's the fellah with the biggest hat of all," Finbar adds in a tone close to ven-

Only Pat backed Istabrag but all three cheered him home. There was approval of every aspect of his Irishness. For jockey Charlie Swan: "Oh sure, everybody knows Charlie. He's the most approachable fellah you could want. For trainer Aidan O'Brien: "A lovely unas-suming fellah." And for Mc-Manus: "J P is the man." The second Irish victory, by Florida. Pearl in the closing bumper,

Finbar explained that they did not back horses just because they were Irish ("betting is not about sentiment") but if their horse was beaten they would al-

went some to restoring nation-

ways cheer an Irish one home. Which explained why all would be rooting for Danoli in today's Gold Cup, although none were certain to support him finan-

"He's our Desert Orchid. He's the horse who's in the colours of the housewives of Ireland," John said.

Pat, who was there for Dawn Run's victory in 1986, reckons a Danoli triumph would be even bigger. "It will be up there with Arkle," he says. "Arkle was the greatest there has ever been, but Danoli would be an unbelieveable achievement. If he wins there will be a riot here.' We have been warned.



Andrew's England recall stuns King

Rugby Union **CHRIS HEWETT**

Saint Jack the Evangelist, high priest of 21st century "interactive rugby", turned turtle in dramatic fashion yesterday and reinvented himself as a bornagain pragmatist by recalling Rob Andrew to the England squad at the age of 34. Quite what coach Rowell's extraordinary decision will do for his side's chances of beating Wales in Cardiff on Saturday to land the Triple Crown was rather less clear than the effect it was likely to have on young Alex King.

goodday to a fusillade of land colleagues – "come on the Messiah," roared Jason Leonard from an open window, "I thought you'd arrive on a donkey," shout-ed Will Carling - King, the fast-developing outside-half from Wasps who was drafted into the squad last week as cover for Paul Grayson and Mike Catt, was left to reflect on an unnecessarily brutal blow to his self-esteem.

Grayson's hip injury was still giving the England selectors grave cause for concern yesterday and Andrew's re-emergence from a year's international re-While Andrew turned up at tirement held out the possibil-

ity, however slim, that he would eyeball-to-eyeball with natured stick from his old Eng- Jonathan Davies, his great adversary from as far back as 1985, at some point during the proceedings at the Arms Park. The selectors feel they have

problems with goal-kicking reserves on the bench and I've simply agreed to cover a situation that may or may not develop," said Andrew, a 70-cap veteran whose duties as director of rugby at Sir John Hall's Newcastle effectively rendered England as a commitment he could do without.

"The request from Jack surprised me and I thought about declining, but after giving it a

great deal of thought over 24 hours I decided that I was in a position to help out. I'm quite happy with my form and fitness but I should point out that this is not the start of a come-back by any stretch of the imagination. It's purely a one-off.

"When I was contacted, it did strike me that I might be facing Jonathan once again. It's not something I envisaged - in fact it's a very strange set of circumstances - but all I've done is respond to a request from the England management."
All very romantic, but wrong

all the same. Having sent for King, who Rowell unhesitatingly described vesterday as "a key el-

ement in our thinking for the 1999 World Cup", the selectors betrayed him by pulling in an old lag over his head. Unbelievably, Rowell claimed that King would react positively to what amounted to a kick in the teeth. King's expression as he left for training at Bisham Abbey suggested

something very different. "We expect Paul Grayson to play against Wales, but Rob is experienced, a No 10 and a place-kicker," Rowell said. "Alex is not a place-kicker at chib level and as I have repeatedly said this season, we have an issue here. This is a oneoff situation; we've done a lot

season but on this occasion said: "I don't see why outside-Rob is the simple solution."

will start against Wales in the pivot position, with Andrew on the bench. Ironically, Rowell revealed that had Tim Stimpson, his full-back, been first choice goal-kicker at Newcastle, King would have held his place among the replacements. And who is the Newcastle goal-kicker at present? Step forward Rob Andrew.

Phil de Glanville, the England captain, reacted uncomfortably to Andrew's call-up. He did his best to avoid commentof building for the future this ing on the situation but he

halves and full-backs should If Grayson pulls out - he faces be automatically pigeon-holed a fitness test today - Catt, an- as kickers. There is no reason other occasional club kicker, that I can see why centres, not work hard on their kicking. After all, we've just been beaten by France thanks to the

goal-kicking of a centre,

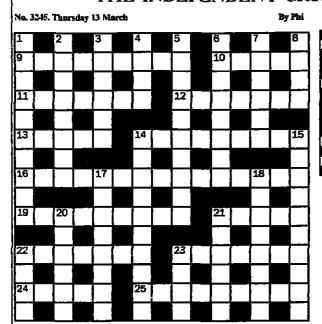
Christophe Lamaison. There are a number of things floating around behind the scenes - the Lions tour in the summer is an obvious one - but for all that, we are very focused on the match in Cardiff. We know we have a lot to do and it's important that we show the mental toughness that was

missing at important times against France.

De Glauville contributed to the irony of the situation in which England find themselves by labelling Neil Jenkins, the Weish full-back and goal-kicker, as the major threat to England's chances of Triple Crown, glory. "He is phenomenal," he said. "Any chance from half-way in is an almost guaranteed three points for the Welsh. In fact, they have big players in key po-sitions and if we do not put the lessons we learned against France into practice, it will be a very long afternoon."

Lamaison on verge of glory,

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD



10 Everyone's to look at mostly narrow passage (5)
II Man has reserve when em

bracing the birds (7) One former railways recalled, brought in to adjust motor (7)
 Network put back introduction of electricity with a sad

14 Warning spirited horse in part of beach (9) 16 A precipitate prediction? (7,

8) 19 Glass sure is broken, not indicative of a sweet disposition 5 21 Senior police officer is splen-

Zealous umpire put back

opening (7)

Small ruling class made up of rich, gay and mostly old char24 Girl enshrining fashionable

polish (5) 25 Salesman mostly keen to enthral children making a second try (9)

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(S) 18 Old jars containing concoction of pea or ham (8) 20 Herb I located initially in rock climbing (6) 21 Look for attention in school

(6) 22 One's found in foot? No. hand (4)
23 TV programmes adult ig-nored – they're distracting (4)

first two full seasons at Forest, "It will be hard but it will be a good experience for me and it was one of the reasons why I came to Forest. And I certainly don't think I will score as any goals here as I did in Scotland. I will try, of course, but this league is a little bit different to the one I've been playing in.

Van Hooijdonk under no illusions at Forest

Footbali

JOE PARKINSON

Pierre Van Hooijdonk came through a rough Premiership ride on his Nottingham Forest debut on Tuesday night and admitted that life in England was just as tough as he expected. The 27-year-old Dutchman

found Colin Hendry in typically uncompromising mood as Forest paraded their new club record signing in the 1-1 draw at Ewood Park. Van Hooijdonk did not manage a single effort on goal and

his night of frustration was typified when he was booked after a 70th-minute challenge on Henning Berg, even though it looked as though the striker was more sinned against than sinner. But the man who netted Celtic an instant £3m when he arrived at the City Ground on Monday to complete a deal that will see the Parkhead club paid another £500,000 if Forest remain in the Premiership, maintained he had already braced

himself for the ordeal. 'If you look at the quality of the players in the Premier League, then in every game you are up against the best defenders in England and sometimes in Europe," said Van Hooijdonk, who will bring Celtic another £1m bonus if he breaks the 20-goal barrier in each of his

"It will be harder playing against top players but that's the point in playing in a top league, t shows you how good you really are. and three points better off than

Van Hooijdonk certainly nev-er had a problem finding the net at Parkhead, scoring 56 goals in 86 starts after switching from NAC Breda two years ago, in-cluding the strike that brought an end to Celtic's six-year tro-phy famine in the 1995 Scottish Cup final.

But a pay dispute clouded the last six months of his time in Glasgow and, when Van Hooijdonk began to see his international chances fade under Tommy Burns, he jumped at the chance to move south of the border. It was a move that now sees him embroiled in a relegation fight rather than Celtic's top-of-the-table quest to prevent Rangers running off with their ninth title on the trot, but even that did not deter the lanky

"I felt that the fact that I was not playing for Celtic could cost me my place in the Dutch squad," Van Hooijdonk said, "If I am not playing then obvious-ly the manager will go for someone else, so the opportunity to go to Forest in the Premier

League was a good one.
"I think Forest will stay in the Premier League, but even if we went down I think I would still get in the Dutch squad if I was doing well in the First Division.

"Patrick Kluivert, Dennis Bergkamp and Ronald de Boer also play in my position for Holland, and they are not the worst strikers in the world, but I usually come on when Holland need to force something. That's why it is important for me to play, whether it is in the Premier

League or the First Division. It is certainly going to be a tall order for Forest to survive. They remain just one place

third-bottom Southampton and have played three games more than the three sides occupying the relegation places. Blackburn, though, now look clear of danger after taking their run to just three defeats in the 18 Premiership matches since Tony Parkes became

stand-in manager in October. It now seems certain that Parkes will be handing over a Premiership club to Roy Hodgson when he arrives from Internazionale in the summer although the Rovers midfielder Billy McKinlay is taking nothing for granted.

"They are still all big games and the quicker we get to the 40point mark the better we will feel," said the Scot, who was booked 15 minutes into his reum from suspension. "Wimbledon on Saturday will be tough but we feel that we are capable of beating anyone at home.

Oldham are facing a losing race against the clock to make the £400,000 signing of the Raith Rovers striker Tony Rougier. The Trinidad international impressed Oldham's manager, Neil Warnock, in a trial on Tuesday, but the English First Division side will have to

sell before they buy.

Although Warnock is trying to move out top scorer Sean McCarthy, who could go before the transfer deadline on 27 March, it may be too late for Rougier. Oldham would have to apply for a new work permit for him and the documents may take too long to push through. More football, page 27



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